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JANE
OF
RANCE.
—
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Harriet Watson

JANE OF FRANCE,

AN

Historical Novel,

BY MADAME DE GENLIS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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1816.



JANE OF FRANCE.

AN

HISTORICAL NOVEL.

THE flight of Louis was kept so completely secret, and managed with so much prudence, that it was entirely unknown when a courier announced to Jane his arrival beyond the frontiers of France. She immediately repaired to the King, whom she found with no one but the Regent, and after a short preamble, informed his Majesty that the Duke of Orleans was gone. The Regent displayed the utmost indignation at the intelligence, but Jane resumed the word and said: "The King will one day judge less rigorously of him, when he shall learn by what persecutions his patience has been exhausted. In the mean time, madam, he

VOL. II.

B

may in some degree discover it by the animosity, which has for a long time made you forget that I am your sister. All I have to add is that it was I who advised and managed his escape."

"Was it you, then," demanded the Regent in a tone of the bitterest irony, "who induced him to fix on Brittany for his asylum?"

"Brittany was the country," replied Jane, "nearest to the frontiers. This motive alone would suggest the idea, at the first moment."

"He will not remain at that court then?" said Madame.

"When he departed, it was not his intention to remain there," answered Jane.

"I am better informed than you," retorted her sister. "I knew, but I hesitated as to believing it, that the envoy of Brittany had been sounding him, and had given him to understand that, if he would annul his marriage, he might aspire to

the hand of the most beautiful and accomplished Princess in Europe, Anne of Brittany.

This *trait* of the blackest malice produced all the effect which Madame desired—it pierced the very soul of Jane.

“ I shall always be ready,” said she; “ to sacrifice myself for him, and never will he sacrifice me. Henceforth, madam, you can neither astonish nor disturb me by a calumny.” Having said these words she rose, took leave of the King, and departed.

Genuine sensibility regulates itself much better than is usually imagined. Undoubtedly it is in the constant habit of exaggerating chagrins which might be borne, but it throws a thick veil over lacerating and irremediable pangs. It is then that it summons hope, and naturally surrounds itself with illusions. Jane had never suffered her thoughts to dwell on the mournful reflection that no marriage could be more easily annulled than her

own, but when the idea had, in a confused form, occurred to her, she had repelled it with horror. She had now, however, heard the terrible words uttered by her sister—they were engraved on her imagination and not to be effaced—they were like an irrevocable decree against her. Shuddering she looked into futurity and distinctly saw part of what would happen. Annihilated by this prescience, she dared not even conceive the project of struggling against events, and fixed her destiny by yielding to sorrow.

While this unfortunate Princess abandoned herself entirely to the most desponding reflections, Louis had finished his journey, and reached the court of Brittany. Sovereigns always receive fugitive Princes, whom they have invited to their courts, with gracious generosity; for the vicissitudes of fortune do not appear to them striking and impressive, except when they overthrow great destinies. Hence this friendly reception and these first demonstrations are almost

always sincere. On the day after the arrival of Louis, there was a very brilliant *fête* at court, but his attention was fixed upon only one object—he saw Anne of Brittany for the first time—he was dazzled and struck with admiration—he thought this Princess a thousand times superior to the report of her. In fact, she combined the charm of a celestial countenance with the regularity of perfect beauty, and the grace and elegance of the most majestic form. Her manner was somewhat distant ; but this noble reserve, which was the offspring of modesty, was tempered by the gentleness of her look, and had nothing haughty or imperious in it. She repressed without repelling. Louis riveted his eyes upon her, and the uneasiness, which he experienced, was so visible that every one observed it.

He afterwards saw Anne frequently and passed the evenings with her. He admired her talents, her accomplishments and sentiments. He heard a thousand

affecting proofs of her amiable disposition, and he became the most ardent of her admirers. This new passion, which was in fact the only real one he had ever felt, overturned all his ideas and all his projects. That he might resign himself to it without constraint and remorse, he repeatedly said to himself that Jane had no affection for him, that by her own wish he had never availed himself of a husband's rights, that the chain which united them was only an apparent one, and that a simple statement of the truth, transmitted to the court of Rome, would restore them both to perfect liberty. Under the pretext of gratitude Louis took care, during his private interviews with the Duke of Brittany, to acquaint him with this part of his history. Francis listened with a degree of interest which by no means escaped the observation of Louis, and from which he augured most favorably. Nevertheless, in spite of all his efforts to emancipate his imagination

from important scruples, his conscience was violently agitated, and the recollection of Jane tormented and afflicted him.

"She only loves me as a tender sister loves a brother," said he to himself.

"Has the perfect esteem, which for ever attaches us to each other, need of such a tie as that, by which we are united; and when Jane herself refused to consummate the marriage thus imposed upon us, was it not with intention of leaving me in the possession of my liberty? I will confide to her the secret of this attachment, which has usurped such empire over me. If I perceive by her answer, of which I shall weigh every word, that this passion, of which the consequences may be easily foreseen, disturbs and afflicts her, I will renounce it for ever. I will never hesitate to sacrifice my happiness to her tranquillity." In fact, Louis meant to write this letter, but had not resolution enough to do it; for he felt that it announced, at the same time, a project, or at least

a wish to annul his marriage. He wrote to Jane, but neither spoke of his attachment, nor even mentioned Anne of Brittany.

Meanwhile, the court of France sent to Louis an order for his immediate return, under pain of being declared a rebel to his King and treated as such. On this occasion, Louis issued a sort of manifesto which he circulated throughout Europe, and which contained an account of the persecutions he had endured. He complained energetically of the regency, and vowed that his attachment and fidelity to his sovereign were incapable of change. At this period, Louis had been two months in Brittany. A short time afterwards, an equerry arrived from Jane, who brought him letters, stating that all his property was seized, and that proceedings were instituted against him with the greatest rigour. This equerry was charged by Jane with another commission, viz : to observe what was passing at the court of Brittany, particularly everything which

bore reference to the Duke of Orleans, for the purpose of rendering a faithful account to her. The man, fixed upon to execute this mission, could not have been better chosen. He was one of those old servants, who were often to be seen at the palaces of Princes in ancient times, but who would now be sought for in vain. They no longer exist, since all ideas of respect and strict subordination have been annihilated. This man, who was entirely devoted to his mistress, made all the proofs of his attachment consist in the most perfect obedience, and the most scrupulous punctuality. His profound respect did not allow him to reflect on the orders he received, and to foresee the consequences. He never commented upon them, but knowing what was prescribed to him, thought this knowledge sufficient. In the present case, his respectful discretion interdicted the use of every species of penetration and sagacity.

When this equerry returned to Paris,

Jane interrogated him with trembling dread, well knowing that she was about to hear the whole truth. "Does your Royal Highness," said he, "command me to conceal nothing?"

"I require it positively," answered she.

"Then, madam," returned the equerry, "all the world says that the Duke is passionately in love with the Princess of Brittany."

"What proofs are there of this?" demanded Jane.

"At the last tournament," replied her messenger, "his Royal Highness wore the colours of the Princess."

"That was a mere act of gallantry," said Jane. "What are these colours?"

"Yellow and gridelin," answered the equerry. "At this tournament the Duke was slightly wounded, and the Princess swooned."

"Great Heaven!" exclaimed Jane, "was the wound of consequence, then? you conceal the truth."

"Of that I am incapable," said her trusty servant. "I repeat that it was of no importance; but when the Princess saw blood flow...."

"Blood!" repeated Jane.

"It was only a violent excoriation," replied the equerry. "I had the honor of paying my respects to his Royal Highness on the following day, and it had already disappeared."

"You are sure, then, that no bad consequences resulted from the accident," said Jane.

"None, madam," returned he. "I did not come away 'till ten days afterwards, and left his Royal Highness in perfect health."

"Proceed with your recital," said the Duchess.

"He had abandoned his device of bees,* and at the tournament there were

* The device of this Prince was, in fact, a number of bees, and when he afterwards ascended the

inscribed upon his buckler the words, *Hope and Mystery*.

"A device at a tournament signifies nothing," observed Jane.

"Pardon me, madam," answered her messenger, "the matter was thus explained. His Royal Highness has told the Duke of Brittany (so much is certain) that you would readily consent to the dissolution of his marriage, and that he could then espouse the Princess, by whom he is beloved. Nevertheless, it is known that his Royal Highness has many scruples, and that he has not yet made any declaration to the Princess, who, on her part, tries as much as possible, to conceal her sentiments, but in vain; for she is perfectly virtuous, and——"

"Enough!" interrupted Jane, who could no longer suppress her violent emo-

throne, his amiable qualities caused these apposite words to be used, in allusion to his device: "*The King has no sting*."

tion. "Go—I thank you for your zeal and sincerity."

The equerry retired. Jane was seated directly opposite to a portrait of the Duke of Orleans, and raising her eyes, which were full of tears, to this painting, she exclaimed: "It is accomplished then. You will abandon and renounce me.—Yet your heart had again tied the fatal knot, which you now wish to break. Still do those enchanting words sound in my ear: '*Return—it is I who summon thee—it is thy husband!*'—I was descending peaceably into the tomb; and only returned to life for the purpose of devoting to you my existence.—You deceived me.—What do you wish to become of me now, left, as I am, alone, rejected and forgotten?—Oh, how debased and fallen shall I feel when you are no longer my lord, when I shall no longer bear the cherished name, which constituted all my pride and glory!—You have deprived me of every thing—even of your confi-

dence.—It is through the public voice that I learn your new sentiments and hopes. One consolation, however, I still retain ; I can at least still serve you.”

—At these words Jane wiped away the tears, with which she was inundated. She took her pen, and wrote the following letter to the Duke of Orleans.

“ It is no longer from yourself that I learn your secrets. I am reduced to the situation of being obliged to discover them. What can you fear with respect to a friend, who wishes nothing but your happiness ? I am not your consort—you are free, and I will declare this in every form that can be useful to you. I might perhaps be allowed to despise the love which I never knew, except from witnessing the errors into which it has so often led you : but you have no right to despise friendship. You yourself have felt its generous impulse, and you know that all its inspirations are pure and disinterested. Address me, then, with perfect frankness,

and above all, do not doubt my zeal in executing your will. I cannot henceforth prove my tenderness, except by my profound submission.—I authorise you to shew this letter to every person, who can possibly take umbrage at the name which I still bear.”

Jane occupied more than two hours in writing this letter, so painful was it to her feelings, and so anxious was she duly to weigh every expression. After having folded and sealed it, she laid it on the table, and looked at it with a kind of terror, from a conviction that it decided her destiny. A thousand different ideas passed in a confused manner through her imagination. Love advised her not to be precipitate in coming to so fatal a decision—she heard the suggestion, but an idea, which nothing could remove, overpowered every other. She repeated: “He adores Anne of Brittany, and his affection is returned. Perhaps this union may be useful to France, and I ought to

sacrifice myself." From this moment she made a vow that she would.

The Countess de Dunois was summoned into Brittany by her husband, and was about so depart immediately. Jane confided the above letter to her care. The Countess was not able to console her royal friend; for she knew, by her husband's letters, that Louis was enamoured of Anne beyond measure, and that every day appeared to add to the violence of his passion. When Jane took leave of the Countess, she felt an indescribable dejection. "Adieu, dear Agnes," said she, "adieu. Your absence is about to deprive me of my only remaining consolation. This sad heart will, henceforth, never potir out its affliction. Silence and sorrow must be my only future companions."

"Ah, madam," replied the Countess, "who can penetrate into futurity? Why may we not hope that you will obtain the reward of so much pain, constancy and virtue?"

"Alas," answered the Princess, "too well I know that when a passion is genuine, and has nothing criminal in its nature, it is incurable—but a single word can dissolve my unfortunate union."

"When he saw you dying," said the Countess de Dunois, "he solemnly promised to ratify his former vows, and if instead of authorising an odious rupture, you remind him of this sacred promise, and avow your secret sentiments, honor, gratitude, and the most tender esteem will easily expel this new passion from his mind."

"I do not doubt it," answered Jane, "but this would be to ask the sacrifice of his happiness, and that of a connection important to the welfare of France. He loves a young Princess, who is wise, virtuous, and in the full bloom of health. He may expect to have children as lovely as their mother—a happiness which the presumptive heir to the throne ought ardently to desire. This Princess too may

be the cause, through such an alliance, of hereafter securing to France a rich and beautiful province. And shall I, whose deformity and languishing state of health ought to condemn me to celibacy—I, to whom love is an inconceivable folly, deprive him of so many advantages? Shall I, like a bad patriot, a cruel friend, and a ridiculous woman, entail misfortunes on him, and defeat his brilliant destiny? Shall I, at the very moment that he is intoxicated with the raptures of love, avow an insensate passion, which he could not return, even if his heart were perfectly free?—No, rather let me die.”

“ Well, Madam,” said the Countess, “ your piety is at least a pledge for your firmness.”

“ Yes,” answered Jane, “ I will be firm; I will endeavour to divert my mind from gloomy thoughts by all the means in my power. I will devote a still greater portion of my attention to the unfortunate. I will be surrounded by them, and neither see

nor hear any other persons. Oh, when I listen to the language of affliction, what will I not do to impart consolation? I shall doubtless feel that misfortune is not always devoid of indemnification, for it exalts piety and inspires benevolence. Go, dear Agnes. Speak to him sometimes of me—describe me to him as I ought to be and shall be, calm, submissive and resigned. Let him not lose the recollection of his unfortunate friend, but let him remember her without uneasiness and remorse.”

No sooner had the Countess left Paris than Jane assumed a feigned name, and went to visit the prisons, accompanied only by a *femme-de-chambre*. She liberated a crowd of unfortunate people detained for debt, and softened the rigours of captivity, in cases where release was impossible. In the course of these benevolent visits she one day perceived, at the foot of a small staircase, a door so low and narrow that a man could scarcely pass through it, by stooping as much

as possible. She asked the jailor what this door opened into. "A dungeon," was the answer.

"A dungeon!" exclaimed Jane. "Is it inhabited?"

"Yes," answered he. "The same man has been seven years in it."

"May, I see him?" demanded Jane.

"No," replied the jailor, "he is imprisoned *au secret*. He has never seen a single person except myself, since he was brought hither. I carry him his bread and water every morning, but I never speak to him. He is not allowed to receive any letters, nor has he the means of writing any. His relations (if relations he has) are ignorant what is become of him. I received the strictest orders respecting him."

"Who gave them?" asked Jane.

"That I am not allowed to tell," answered the jailor.

"How old is this unfortunate man?" said she.

"He was twenty years of age when

he came hither," returned her conductor, "but he is since grown very old. His hair is white and he is bent almost double."

"I wish much to converse with him," replied the Princess. "Take this purse—it contains twenty louis. I promise to double it and to preserve the strictest secrecy, if you will allow me to enter this dungeon. I pledge myself also for the discretion of my attendant. Consider that my only object is to do a good action, and that I shall certainly not defeat it by betraying your confidence."

"It is true," said the jailor, "that you seem of too kind a nature to do any harm.—Well then, I will confide in you, and tell you all.—This poor young man is confined by order of the Regent. He was sent hither during the life of the late King, because she thought that he had written a satirical song against her, but that was never proved."

"Alas," exclaimed Jane, "how can any one have so vindictive and barbarous a disposition!"

While she uttered these words, she thought of Louis, and thanked Heaven that he was absent.

“ But mum ! ” said the jailor. “ She is the Regent now and next to almighty.”

“ Lead me into the dungeon,” said Jane.

“ Follow me, then,” answered he, “ and remember your promise.”

Saying these words, he opened the little door—he held a lantern before him—he entered—Jane and her attendant followed. They descended thirty steps—another door was opened—they passed into the dungeon. Jane immediately perceived the prisoner, seated on a log of wood, with his head hanging down, his eyes fixed on the earth and his arms folded. She was penetrated with compassion; and for a moment stood motionless—then advancing, she said: “ Young prisoner, I come to relieve you. Ere long you shall quit this dungeon.”

“ Ha! A voice!” exclaimed he, starting,

—“and women!—Quit this dungeon!
—I understand you. My woes then will
at last be ended.”

“Yes,” answered Jane, “I leave you
for the present, but in four hours, when
night comes on, I will return.”

“Tutelary genius of prisons,” cried
the young man, sinking upon one knee,
“where is my wife?”

“Are you married, then?” demanded
Jane.

“I had been a husband eight months,”
replied he, “when I was plunged into
this dungeon. Perhaps too I am a fa-
ther, for my wife had six months borne
beneath her bosom a pledge of our af-
fection.—Where is she?—Tell me, you
that are sent from Heaven and must
know every thing.”

“We will find her,” said Jane.

“Can I doubt it when you make the
promise?” returned he. “Oh, may Heaven
for ever grant you the celestial power of
softening even the rugged souls of jailors,

of penetrating into inaccessible dungeons, and pouring joy into hearts sinking with despair!"

While he spoke, Jane looked, in vain, for any appearance of youth in his countenance. While contemplating his wrinkled forehead, his white hair and crippled form, she thought she beheld an old man bending beneath the weight of his infirmities, and she inwardly execrated tyranny and cruelty, equally homicides in their vengeance, though they may not actually shed blood; for while they suffer their victim to live, they cut off the brightest years of his life, and poison the sad remainder. The jailor, who was very uneasy at the promise made by the unknown lady, was about to interpose his authority, when Jane, leaning towards his ear, whispered who she really was. On hearing a name so universally respected, he bowed low and said: "I ought to have guessed it." The Duchess now left the dungeon, loaded with the

sacred blessings of misfortune. She immediately went to the King, knowing it was the time at which she was sure to find him alone. She obtained from him an order, which authorised her to visit the prisons of those unhappy wretches who were confined *au secret*, and to release such as had neither committed murder nor crimes against the state. Furnished with this, she flew to the wretched man, who expected her with all the uneasiness of anxiety, and all the ardour of hope. She carried with her clothes for the prisoner, whose name was Julian. He was brought to her in the jailor's room—he could scarcely support himself—he prostrated himself at her feet. Jane, whose kind nature allowed her to forget nothing, caused him to take nourishing food, but in moderation. He was then conveyed, by her direction, to a chamber in her palace, and a physician was sent to pay him every attention. A singular idea attached Jane particularly

to this man. He had asked for his wife. She remembered that, among the poor widows whom she had assembled at her charitable institution, there was one who was very young, and who interested her more than the rest, by her profound melancholy. Jane had made it a rule never to question the unfortunate women, to whom she gave an asylum; it was sufficient for her that they produced proofs of irreproachable conduct. Hence she was ignorant of this young widow's story; she only knew, that the loss of her husband plunged her into distress, and that she was the mother of a child, seven years old, which Jane had put to school. The latter went, without losing a moment, to interrogate this woman, who confessed that she had no certainty of her husband's death. These first words made the feeling heart of the Duchess palpitate with joy. "But why, then," said she, "did you come hither as a widow?"

"Alas!" answered the poor woman,

"because I may be one, and it is too probable that I am; further, because your Royal Highness receives no one in this house except widows and children."

"And on what ground do you suppose that your husband is no longer alive?" demanded Jane.

"Because seven years ago he suddenly disappeared," answered she, "since which time I have had no tidings of him. I was then within three months of my confinement."

"What was his name?" asked Jane eagerly.

"Julian," said the woman.

"Oh God!" exclaimed the Duchess, with a sensation of the purest satisfaction, "oh Supreme Consoler, I thank thee." After some preparation, she announced to Julia (which was the woman's name) the extraordinary event, by which she was about to be restored to happiness. Her transports were indescribable, and

Jane enjoyed them doubly from the idea that Julian too would soon experience them all. Fearing that, in his present weak state, violent emotions might be fatal to him, she delayed this affecting reunion; but as soon as he had gained a little more strength, she placed his wife and child in his arms, giving him, at the same time, a purse of gold, and allotting to him a pension for life. With what delight Jane contemplated this interesting couple, who only looked back at their past misfortunes and sufferings in order to bless her!—With what ecstasy she saw Julian press to his heart the child he had never before seen! It had reached an age, at which it was capable of returning his caresses;—and returned them with sensibility. “Oh my dear boy,” said the happy father, “how will I love thee—how will I occupy myself in every thing which concerns thee, that I may, by doubly enjoying the years to come,

no longer lament the loss of those, during which I have been deprived of a father's joys!"

At this affecting scene Jane's tears flowed copiously, and, as she left the room, she inwardly said that, in spite of the bitterest chagrins, those who possess good hearts need never find life a burthen, Heaven having created such sweet enjoyments for them only. In every state, who has not the celestial power of doing good? A single tear has often been sufficient to mitigate affliction,—Feeling and compassionate beings are the centinels placed on earth to watch over misfortunes. Whatever may be their particular situation, they will not murmur, if they zealously fulfil their divine mission.

In the course of a short time Jane completed her examination of the prisons, and restored to their families many victims of despotism, who had long inhabited their subterraneous dungeons and

were forgotten. New alarms, however, now occupied her mind, and increased her uneasiness to the utmost. The envoy of the Duke of Brittany was making preparations for his departure, and every thing announced an approaching rupture with that court.

The Countess de Dunois delivered Jane's letter to Louis, as soon as she arrived in Brittany. He received it with lively emotion, and without asking any questions, immediately retired to read it. The perusal affected him deeply, but he loved Anne to idolatry, and, at the expiration of a few minutes, no part of the letter rested on his memory, except this decisive passage : *I am not your consort—you are free, and I will declare this in every form that can be useful to you.*"

"In fact," said he to himself, "she has never felt any sensation for me but esteem, sublime as her character. I am to her nothing more than a much-loved

brother ; and will she not continue to be my sister, my most valued friend ? The mild and virtuous Anne, far from being jealous, will participate in my tenderness and admiration of her. Being the daughter of a monarch, she will lose no portion of her rank by resigning my name, and I do not dissolve our union 'till I am become a proscribed fugitive, deprived of all his fortune.—Why, then, should I have any scruples ?”

Thus did the Duke argue, but a voice, nevertheless, which he could not stifle, murmured at the bottom of his heart. It made itself heard in spite of the sophistry of passion, and repeated to him that, since the death of Louis XI, he had voluntarily, and even with enthusiasm, pledged his faith to that Princess, whom he now wished to repudiate, and that she had received his vows with ecstasy. It is true that he was convinced of her having no passion for him, but he could not conceal from himself that she attached a

great value to the title of his wife, and that she delighted in the tie which made their destinies inseparable. She released him, however, and he had not strength to refuse this sacrifice. He shewed her letter to the Duke of Brittany, who appeared to be highly pleased with it, and asked to keep it in his possession for a few days. Louis consented to this, being convinced that it was the Duke's intention to shew it to his daughter.

Francis heard it generally reported that the health of Charles VIII became worse every day, and that the young King had not long to live. In this case, the Duke of Orleans would ascend the throne, and the Duke of Brittany, therefore, saw with pleasure his passion for Anne. The forced marriage of Louis could be dissolved immediately, and without difficulty, as Jane opposed no obstacle to the measure. Francis, however, had to manage matters so as not to offend several foreign Princes who applied for the

hand of his daughter. Intending to declare war against France, he was unwilling, at such a juncture, to create any new enemies; he, therefore, resolved to suspend the union of Anne and Louis, leaving to the foreign Princes the hope of an alliance which they earnestly wished for. At the same time, to make himself sure of the Duke of Orleans, and fix him in Brittany 'till the King died, it became necessary that Louis should do something which would make a reconciliation between him and the court of France utterly impossible. To effect this, Francis undertook the task of persuading him to place himself at the head of the army which was about to attack France. Louis, at first, rejected the revolting proposition, but the Duke of Brittany was not disheartened by this. He relied on love, and on the resentment of a fervid young Prince, of acute feelings, who was justly irritated by the most odious and violent persecution.

Francis reminded him that the manifesto expressly disclaimed the idea of commencing hostilities against the King, that it declared war solely against the Regent, and that the Duke of Orleans was not asked to take the command for any other purpose than that of delivering France from an oppressive government, and resuming the rights of which he had been unjustly deprived — rights which he would only use to prove himself the most faithful and devoted subject, and to confirm the King upon the throne by causing his authority to be respected, which the violence and tyranny of the Regent had rendered odious. This language, and the promise of Anne's hand, determined Louis ; he pledged his word, and a few days afterwards signed the treaty. It was agreed that the projected marriage of the Princess should be included among the secret articles 'till the end of the campaign.

While this treaty was in preparation,

Dunois, to whom the Duke of Orleans had not ventured to mention it, received the information from one of the ministers of Francis with equal grief and astonishment. This faithful and devoted friend by no means concealed his sentiments, "How!" exclaimed he. "Is it possible that your Royal Highness can take up arms against the King?"

"No," answered Louis, "it is against the Regent. I wish to emancipate the King from a detestable guardianship, and restore the majesty of the throne, by causing justice and clemency to be seated there with Charles."

"It is not by rendering yourself guilty of rebellion," said Dunois, "it is not by revolting against your sovereign that you can enlighten him."

"I wish to punish the implacable woman who has persecuted me," replied the Duke.

"And can you justify this furious pro-

ceeding?" asked the Count. "Oh, think how dreadful it is, when a man is formed by Providence to practise virtue and obtain true glory, that he should blindly rush into guilt and shame! You can never do what you mention but by placing a bandage over your eyes, which this bandage will fall off at the very first step you take in this tortuous path. You will then see before you and around you nothing but precipices—you will experience nothing but humiliations."

"Humiliations!" repeated Louis.

"Yes," answered the Count. "Rebels, who put themselves in the power of foreigners, and especially royal rebels will find them inevitable. Policy just now seduces you by deceitful promises, and ere long policy will have no object but your degradation. What rank can the Prince hold in a foreign nation, who has fought against his King and country? What rights will he venture to claim?"

Those of sacred hospitality? He has lost them all by taking arms against his kindred."

"Spare me these superfluous observations," said the Duke. "I have pledged my word, and it is inviolable."

"Your word!" exclaimed Dunois. "Great heaven! It was not in the power of your Royal Highness to pledge it, for the King had received your oath. That sacred oath annuls whatever would interfere with it, that and alone is inviolable."

"You would have me bow my head, then, said Louis, "beneath the despotic and barbarous hand of the woman who oppresses me, meanly yield the victory to her, and allow myself to be despoiled?"

"Despoiled of what?" demanded the Count. "Of your estates? The King would restore them to you. As all Europe is indignant at the treatment you have experienced, you should oppose to it nothing but firmness, patience and moderation.—You can still do this. The

hateful treaty is not signed. Fly from this dangerous court, and seek some other asylum. There dwell in voluntary obscurity 'till the regency is at an end, and let nothing tempt you to leave it unless the war takes an unfortunate turn. In that case shew yourself, and hasten to the assistance of your sovereign, of your fellow-countrymen. This is the character in which the Duke of Orleans should appear—this is the example which he should shew to the Princes of his august race. How will you applaud yourself for such a line of conduct, if you one day mount the throne! But if you persist in rebellion, how will you then be able to punish it, or complain of it? Your enemies may dispose of your property, but your reputation is in your own hands, and you alone can fix your own rank in history. There the illusions of dignity and regal pomp no longer have existence, and the most elevated station is allotted only to virtue."

At these words Dunois, perceiving that Louis was moved, fell at his feet and embracing his knees, conjured him to yield to the voice of friendship and his conscience. The Duke was deeply affected, and for a moment undecided how to act, but the recollection of Anne stifled all his remorse. "No, no," cried he, "it is done—it is too late—and if I commit a fault, I shall employ my life to repair it."

"The more virtues you possess," answered the Count, "the more dangerous will be the example you set. It will become a precedent for all dissatisfied Princes."*

"I repeat," said Louis, "that I shall always preserve the attachment and fidelity which I owe to the King, and I would not undertake any thing against his ministers, if he were old enough to chuse

* Perhaps it afterwards influenced the Constable de Bourbon and the Prince de Condé.

them ; but I conceive that I serve him by emancipating him from the present regency, and hence you will understand why it is impossible to dissuade me from my purpose. But as to you, my dear Dunois, who entertain sentiments of so different a nature, return to France. I authorise it—I request it.”

“ No, Sir,” answered the Count, “ I cannot.”

“ Why?” demanded Louis.

“ Because I am thoroughly convinced,” said Dunois, “ that the step you are about to take will be your ruin.”

“ Thanks, Dunois,” replied the Duke, “ I recognise and admire your generosity, but will not abuse it.”

“ Do not praise this action,” observed the Count. “ Far from being proud of it, I feel but too sensibly how culpable it is. I sacrifice my duty to my friendship for you. It is a weakness, it is a great fault—but it is impossible for me to leave

you, when I foresee all the evils that await you."

At these words, Louis, who was deeply affected, took the hand of Dunois, and pressed it between his own. A thousand different feelings agitated his great soul, and friendship was perhaps about to obtain what had been refused to the councils of wisdom, when a message from the Duke of Brittany interrupted the conversation. Louis immediately repaired to court—he entered the Duke's cabinet, he signed the preliminary articles of the treaty, and on the following day the circumstance was publicly announced.

Louis soon saw some of the Count's predictions verified. All the superior officers in the army of Brittany openly expressed a great repugnance to serve under the command of a foreign Prince; yet the latter had only a title of honor in the army, which was due to his rank. An experienced military man was to be his guide and plan the campaign, which

he did without consulting Louis. The Prince complained to Francis, but in vain. All the courtiers too, who had hitherto shewn the greatest deference and respect to Louis, erected themselves into judges of his conduct, and loudly censured him, pouring forth, at the same time, a long string of patriotic sentiments—a plan common enough when it is wished to place the actions of others in a bad point of view. The Prince experienced nothing beyond cold respect, and those, who were attached to him, assumed a tone bordering on contempt, with a degree of reserve which was next to insult. In conversation he was obliged to digest a thousand indirect reflections, or at least observations which had the appearance of being such, as they consisted of praises bestowed on faithful subjects, and eulogiums on the love of the native soil. Humiliated as he was by remorse, he was obliged to conceal, as well as he could, the involuntary blush which the

incessant admiration and praise of heroic virtue summoned to his cheek. Wounded as he was to the very soul, he displayed nothing but carelessness with regard to general opinion, and an increase of pride. This is the only species of dignity which is retained by the guilty. He treated those with haughtiness who treated him coldly, and ceased to be affable towards any one. By this conduct he curbed the conduct of a few, but disgusted all the rest, and made himself hated. This Prince, who was so worthy of being respected, and afterwards was really so much respected by his subjects, required all the force of his character to bear up against his situation ; and he often said secretly to himself that, but for love, all the injustice and persecution, which he could have undergone in France, would have been a thousand times preferable to the disgusting mortifications he experienced in Brittany. One look of the Princess, however, consoled him for

every thing. Anne, encouraged by her father, and Jane's letter which she had read, no longer put any constraint on her partiality to Louis. She had not yet allowed the confession to escape her lips, nor did her lover require it, her attachment being shewn in so many other ways. Every day she confirmed his hopes by some charming act, rendered still more exquisite by its delicacy. Intoxicated with love, he forgot every thing when with her, and while he saw or heard her, thought himself happy: but an event, as sad as it was unexpected, suddenly put an end to this fragile and deceitful felicity, and filled his soul with all the horrors that remorse and the most violent passion can produce, when combated by gratitude and generosity.

The Countess de Dunois was suddenly taken ill. All the care of the most tender affection, and every thing that could be done by the art of medicine, were useless. She sunk under the violence of

the disorder, and after five days of great suffering, this excellent woman expired in the arms of her inconsolable husband. The Duke of Orleans flew to the assistance of his friend, dragged him from the house of mourning and conveyed him to his own. Two days afterwards, one of the women, who had attended on the Countess, brought a small box, on which were engraved these words: "*Letters from the Duchess of Orleans.*" Dunois immediately presented it to Louis. It was locked, and no one knew where to look for the key. The Duke caused it to be opened by force, and then shut himself up in his cabinet, with the intention of burning all these letters. They were arranged in such a manner, that those, which had been last received, lay at the top, and as he raised some of them, his eye fell upon the middle of a page, where he read these words: "*Reflect how sacred and important this secret is. Let it die with you.*" These words ex-

cited the curiosity of Louis. His first idea was that they referred to some black project formed against him by the Regent, which Jane had discovered and defeated, and that she wished him not to know it, in order that his resentment might not be roused. He formed this conjecture because, on several other occasions, Jane had acted in a similar manner. That the secret bore personal reference to himself he was certain, because she attached so much importance to it. He wished, therefore, to solve the mystery, and sat down to read the letter, after having remarked, that it was dated on the very day she had written the one, which he had shewn to the Duke of Brittany. But who can describe his excessive astonishment, when, by reading this letter, addressed to the Countess de Dunois, he discovered Jane's real secret—her passion, so tender and so exalted by constraint, her silence, and all her generous sacrifices? After

having finished the perusal, Louis, who was struck with admiration and oppressed with grief, remained for some time motionless. His arteries and heart beat with violence—his soul was so full that he could scarcely breathe—he looked with terror into a stormy futurity, which shewed him nothing but perils without glory and without an object, hopeless love and useless remorse. He again took the letters, and mechanically began to read them, 'till led on by their attraction and solaced by the tears which they caused him to shed, he continued 'till he had perused them all. During this employment, forgetting by a sort of enchantment his situation and troubles, he felt nothing but the admiration, inspired by so much delicacy, grandeur of soul and purity of attachment. Amidst all his sorrows and remorse, he found a pleasure in thinking that he was the object of such an heroic feeling; at the same time, his heart was torn by the un-

affected description of all that Jane had endured. "Incomparable being!" exclaimed he, "from a fear of distressing me, then, thou hast never shewn me half thy tenderness and virtues—thou hast concealed from me all thy sufferings. Glory of thy sex and sublime model of patience, indulgence and magnanimity, it is in silence that thou shouldst be admired, for who can sufficiently extol thee?—And I, who caused thee to shed so many tears—I who am about to accept the sacrifice of thy happiness, perhaps of thy life—I who have conceived the design of taking from thee my name, and repudiating thee, what am I?—Great Heavens! A monster of ingratitude and cruelty.—No, no, the first of my duties is to render thee happy, and make atonement for so many acts of injustice.—But oh God, can I do this without betraying honour and affection, and without becoming the vile deceiver of lovely innocence? I am compelled to sacrifice

one of these angelic women. I must decide which of them is to be my victim. — Dreadful choice, impossible yet absolutely requisite ! Oh, how can I escape from this abyss ? ”

These reflections plunged the unhappy Prince into deep despair. He remained all the morning in his cabinet, re-perusing Jane's letters, and steeping them in tears. At length he sent in search of Dunois ; he was sure to find compassion in the desolate heart, the sorrows of which he so sincerely shared. He made him read Jane's letters. The astonishment of Dunois was extreme, and proved how faithfully the Countess had kept the secret of the Princess. He participated in the affliction of Louis, but strenuously supported Jane's cause. Louis acknowledged that gratitude and admiration, so well founded, ought to triumph over love ; but he was beloved by Anne—he had given birth to this feeling by entering into solemn engagements—he adored

her! In spite of the arguments urged by Dunois, he remained in a state of painful irresolution. The war released him from this perplexing situation, for he was called upon to join the army without delay. Louis was about to take the command, and Dunois accompanied him. The Prince repaired to Saint-Aubin-du-Cormier, a town in Brittany, four leagues from Rennes. He there found the army very ill-disposed towards him, and the result is well known. La Tremouille commanded the royal troops, and advanced towards Saint-Aubin, near which place the battle was fought. The Duke of Orleans displayed great military talents and most conspicuous valour, but he was neither seconded nor obeyed. Not being able to make himself heard and to rally the troops when thrown into disorder, he saw that the battle was lost and rushed into the enemy's ranks with all the intrepidity of despair. He was surrounded and made prisoner by La Tremouille.

Dunois, who had not for a single moment quitted the unfortunate Prince, shared the same fate.*

The news of this victory, on the part of the French, was instantly transmitted to Paris, and completed the joy of the Regent, as being an event which insured her vengeance and confirmed her power, but Jane had need of all her firmness to resist such accumulated distress. She had just learnt that the Countess de Dunois was no more, and was plunged in deep affliction, when the intelligence arrived that the army of Brittany was defeated, and the Duke of Orleans taken. The pain, however, which she experienced, was less agonizing than that felt by her before the battle, when she had fears for his life. He was at least in existence, he was not wounded, and the war was at an end. Her first step was to go and throw herself at the King's feet,

* Historical.

to implore her husband's pardon, and obtain a sentence of banishment, instead of his being consigned to a prison, but by order of her cruel sister she found all the approaches to the palace closed. The King was inaccessible to her, and she was not even able to convey a note to him. She returned in despair to her own palace, and knowing that the King would, on the following day, go to the church of *Notre Dame*, for the purpose of hearing *Te Deum* sung, in consequence of the victory, she resolved to meet him in his progress and speak to him publicly. This idea calmed her a little ; but what was her surprise on being told, at day-break, that she was a prisoner in her palace, that she could not be allowed to leave it, and that guards were appointed to keep her in custody ! It was in vain that she wished to write to the King ; she was told that his Majesty would not receive any letter from her. "Alas !" exclaimed Jane, " it is not my brother whom I accuse of this barbarous conduct. The

hand, that inflicts the blows which I so sensibly feel, is too inhuman for me to mistake it."

The Regent did not rest here. She banished all the ladies attached to Jane, and substituted her own creatures. She acted in the same manner as to all the domestics. Jane was thus deprived of her friends and faithful servants, as well as the means of complaining and perhaps obtaining some alleviation of her misfortunes. She was a prisoner in her own palace, a prey to the most torturing anxiety, and surrounded by none but enemies, spies and informers. In this dreadful situation, she displayed all the elevation of her character. She confounded her persecutors by her pious resignation, and by gentleness of conduct, yet replete with dignity. After the complaint which grief wrung from her at the first moment, she neither uttered a reproach nor a murmur. She exhibited constant affliction, but without weakness, and undeviating firm-

ness without ostentation. She never spoke except for the purpose of briefly replying, yet her silence had in it nothing contemptuous, and her language was never tinged with bitterness. She had consigned her cause and destiny to the Supreme Judge — she had taken refuge in the bosom of religion—she prayed—she submitted patiently to her lot, and she was supported by a sublime hope. Her greatest uneasiness arose from not being able to correspond with the Duke of Orleans. She had no fears of a supposition, on his part, that she had abandoned him, but she thought this profound silence would perhaps persuade him that she had sunk under her misfortunes, and was no longer in existence. Her heart was torn when she reflected on the sorrow, which so sad a supposition would entail upon him. The Duchess of Beaujeu, knowing how universally Jane was beloved, had taken every possible precaution to conceal a great part of the persecutions, of which this innocent

and virtuous Princess was the object; but Divine Justice which, when it does not yet unveil wicked actions, at least causes them to be suspected—this Almighty Guardian of the oppressed, watched over Jane, and in spite of the exile or imprisonment of all those who were devoted to her, in spite of unbounded and unblushing tyranny, the public soon became acquainted with all her sufferings. An unexpected and astonishing spectacle ensued, which made malice turn pale, and disconcerted powerful infamy. A multitude of poor people, young and old, among whom were women, carrying infants in their arms, suddenly surrounded Jane's palace, and loudly demanded their benefactress. It was in vain that attempts were made to drive them away. Their tears and groans affected the people, who joined them, defended them, and dispersed the guards of the palace. This tumult and the reiterated shouts of "*Long live the Duchess of Orleans*" became so

violent, that Jane was obliged to shew herself in a balcony. Her presence excited that enthusiasm so sincere among the people, and so easily carried to an intoxicating height. The Duchess asked for a moment's silence and obtained it. She then conjured all present to calm their irritated feelings. "You have nothing to fear," said she, "for the sister of your sovereign. The justice and integrity of the King are my sureties. I expect every thing from them, and may justly expect it if I practise submission, combined with a little patience. I am truly sensible of your attachment, but by remaining assembled here, you will afflict and injure me. Do not expose me to the dreadful lot of seeing you dispersed by an armed force, which you cannot resist.—Go, my friends. Let my voice suffice to make you return home. There pray for me, and God will grant what you implore, for it protects innocence, but punishes revolt. Be it my triumph to have persuaded you, and re-

flect that the King will give me credit for it."

She no sooner ceased, than four or five voices exclaimed : " We obey your Royal Highness," and the crowd hastily dispersed, calling down blessings upon the Princess. This impressive scene taught Madame the degree of power attached to virtue.

Towards midnight Jane was woke, by the Regent's orders, and obliged to depart with an escort for the estate, thirty leagues from Paris, where she had on a former occasion resided with the Duke of Orleans. When the King seized the estates of Louis, he ordered this to be excepted and reserved for Jane. In order to cause no commotion, and hardly to meet any body, the carriage and its escort went by cross roads, which made the journey infinitely longer. It was not yet day when they stopped at a village, to change horses. Jane started when she heard the name of this village ; for

she remembered that it was part of an estate belonging to the Count de Dunois, and she knew that the coffin, containing the remains of the Countess, had been sent by her husband from Brittany, to be deposited in the chapel of the castle. She earnestly intreated, and obtained permission, to stop a few moments that she might pray at the tomb of her unfortunate friend. The castle was a gothic building situated at the extremity of the village. The old steward hastened at the name of the Princess who asked him where his master was, flattering herself that he was a prisoner with the Duke of Orleans.

“ Alas, madam,” replied the steward, “ if I knew that, I should not be here, for I would have gone to join him. I shall always consider him as my master, though this castle no longer belongs to him. It is confiscated, as well as all his other property ; I only remain here to guard the corpse of my dear mistress. Objections are made to my lord’s inten-

tion of having her buried in the vault, and I am allowed to have the care of the coffin 'till it is decided where my lady is to be deposited."

"Faithful servant of my unfortunate friend," said Jane, "I charge you to ask, in my name, that the Countess may be interred in the chapel, to which I am repairing. Perhaps I may be allowed to confer this last sad office of regard on her who was my best and dearest friend.—And you—when I shall again have the command of an asylum, come and rejoin me. I shall find consolation in providing for the winter of your life."

At these words tears flowed down the old man's furrowed cheeks—he bowed respectfully and conducted Jane into the chapel. She wished to enter the vault alone—her guards and the steward, therefore, remained at the door. Jane, who was oppressed by the deepest sorrow, descended thirty steps. She trembled as she entered the mansion of death, which was lighted by a small lamp suspended

from the arch, and by a wax taper almost consumed, which was placed near the coffin; and had been lighted by the venerable hand of the steward—a pious oblation, renewed by the old man every night. — Jane advanced with great oppression of heart, and knelt at the side of the coffin, then raising her clasped hands, she said: “ Oh my friend, it is for myself that I weep. Who is more justified than I, in envying the unalterable peace which you enjoy? Your rapid passage through this world was at least a serene unclouded one, for you never felt the pangs of love. Your pure and placid life was never disturbed by the passions. You were alive to compassion and to friendship, but wisdom preserved you from a dangerous and fatal exaltation. It is only now, when you are released from all terrestrial ties—it is only at the feet of the Eternal and in sight of Supreme perfection that your angelic soul has resigned itself to the transports of admiration, enthusiasm and ardent love.

You did not profane the Divine Power by loving unboundedly on earth, but reserved it for immortality. You had no idol in this sad earthly dwelling, but offered to your Creator the homage worthy of him—while I, wretch that I am, feel the torments of loving without hope, and am hurried to the grave by a passion as vivid as it is insensate.—Alas, I am like fragile straw, consumed by a violent fire. Far less than this would have sufficed to destroy my frail existence.—Oh my dear Agnes, you are no more. Your kind hand will not support your dying and forsaken friend. You will not hear my groans.—My tears will never again flow freely except in the abode of death and on your bier.—Oh if he would but reunite us!”

While she spoke these words, the light of the wax taper expired. She shuddered—she felt as if she was about to heave her last sigh. The image of Louis immediately recurred to her mind. “It is accomplished,” said she. “I die—but

at least I die his wife." Saying these words she fell on the coffin, but without entirely losing the use of her senses. The guards, uneasy at not seeing her return, descended into the vault. On hearing a noise, she revived, and leaning on the arm of one of the soldiers, withdrew from the melancholy place. She again took her seat in the carriage, and continued her journey.

The sensations which she experienced on entering the castle, formerly inhabited by Louis and herself for three months, were truly painful. There she had passed some of the happiest days of her life, in the midst of charming society. There Louis had felt genuine and lively affection for her. She had traversed the spacious apartments and beautiful gardens, accompanied by her husband and her friend the Countess. Now she had no longer a husband, and her friend was mingled with the dead. This residence, heretofore so delightful, was become a mournful prison. She had for-

merly issued her orders there, but now she was under the command of others, and nothing more than an unfortunate captive. With what oppression of heart did she revisit the turf hillock, where Louis had written a stanza on the box of flowers! The inscription remained, but the rose-tree was dead—the rose-tree planted by the hand of Louis, an engraving of which in all its bloom he had adopted for his private seal. “Alas,” said she, “deprived as it was of any fostering care, the tempest crushed it. Thus has the chilling blast of adversity blighted my youthful days.”

Jane found, in this solitary spot, only one of the domestics whom she had left there. It was in vain that she addressed the satellites around her, and renewed her questions respecting the Duke of Orleans—she obtained no answer, and her request, that a letter from her might be conveyed to the King, was always refused. Instead of the ladies, who had

been removed from her society, only one had been assigned to her—the Baroness de C**, a woman entirely devoted to the Regent, or in other words, to the ruling power. She was of a cold, obdurate nature—her cupidity was excessive—and she never made any reflections as to the good or bad qualities of Princes, but merely calculated what advantages were to be derived from their favor. Regal power was the object of her ardent veneration; and in fact every person, who had the means of conferring great appointments, was in her opinion entitled to profound respect. At the same time, all the people, who were in disgrace, were in her eyes wretches deserving neither mercy nor compassion. To pity them she thought a weakness, to defend them a crime. Attachment and fidelity she called low feelings; she was proud of this opinion and boasted of it. In order to rid herself, as much as possible, of this womans presence and conver-

sation, Jane declared that as she was not allowed to leave the estate, she wished at least to walk in the gardens, unaccompanied except by her guards, who did not interrupt her reveries, because they followed her at a distance of fifty yards. The Baroness made many objections, but Jane resisted them firmly, and at last obtained this liberty.

From the commencement and during the time of her captivity, she had frequently been tempted to try whether she could gain over to her interest one of the guards or servants ; but she had no money at her disposal, and without that, how could she hope to succeed ? She felt too that any failure would render her situation still more disagreeable, and she resolved, therefore, to abandon the idea. Her only consolations were to pray, to read, and write daily to the Duke of Orleans, though she had scarcely a hope of ever being able to convey her letters to him. She was so strictly guarded that

the centinels watched her even in the gardens, the only part of the domain in which she was allowed to walk.

One morning, when she was escorted as usual, she seated herself in a garden-chair under a yoke-elm. The soldiers took their station, at the usual distance of about fifty yards, under some fruit-trees. In about a quarter of an hour, the gardeners arrived to gather fruit. The guards amused themselves by assisting them, and while thus engaged, with their backs to the Princess, she distinctly heard a voice behind her, which said in a low tone through the thick part of the yoke-elm: "*Listen, but let no one suspect it.*" Jane sat motionless, and lent an attentive ear. The voice then rapidly said, in as low a tone as before: "*Put your hand behind you, and you will find a letter of importance on the seat. Tomorrow, at the same hour, bring your answer, and slip it behind you. It will be taken..*" Jane fixed her eyes on the

guards who paid no attention to her, seized the letter, carefully concealed it, and immediately returned to the castle. The moment she was alone, she opened the mysterious packet with lively emotion, and found in it these words:

“ After passing three months in devising different stratagems, Julian has succeeded, under a feigned name, in obtaining the situation of an under-gardener at the castle, where the Princess is a prisoner who rescued him from a dungeon, and restored him to liberty and happiness. He adores Providence which fixes him here to solicit and to execute the commands of his benefactress. Let her speak and she shall be obeyed. The zeal, which gratitude inspires, will make him undertake any thing, and will render every thing possible.”

This letter excited, in Jane's mind, the first sensation of joy which she had known for a long time. She thanked Heaven a thousand times, and as often

blessed the faithful Julian—she awaited the following day with great impatience—she wrote a long letter to Louis, and another to the King, intreating of his Majesty that she might be allowed to share the prison of the Duke her husband. She also wrote to Julian, conjuring him to effect the delivery of these two letters, and particularly to return as soon as possible, for the purpose of bringing her intelligence as to Louis. On the following day, at noon, she went again into the garden—she entered the yoke-elm walk—she seated herself as before, and in the course of a few minutes put her hand behind her. The packet of letters was seized and drawn into the thicket. A moment afterwards she resumed her walk, happy in thinking that a correspondence with the Duke of Orleans was at least about to be established. Julian, after having read her note, went in search of the principal gardener, and under the pretext of family affairs, ob-

tained leave of absence for two months. He immediately found the means of transmitting the letter to the King, but this Prince was too much prejudiced against Jane to give a favorable answer. He was persuaded that she had wished to excite sedition and revolt among the people. Thus the scene had been described to him, in which the Princess, on the contrary, had soothed the emotion of the multitude assembled round her palace; thus are monarchs deceived, and their apparent injustice is often only an error founded on a false report. The King briefly and coldly replied to Jane that he refused the permission to join the Duke of Orleans, adding that before she solicited favors, she should learn to deserve them by her conduct. This letter was sent direct to Jane, who at least ascertained thereby that Julian had succeeded in effecting the delivery of her own.

Julian, having made every enquiry relative to the Duke of Orleans, learnt that

he was a prisoner in a strong castle, sixty leagues from Paris, and repaired thither without delay. The governor of this fortress was a humane and upright man, who carefully guarded his illustrious prisoner, but who at the same time treated him with all the respect due to his rank and misfortunes. Julian, who was a man of quickness and intelligence, thought, from this character, that he might confide in him, and having obtained a private interview, acquainted him with his mission and delivered to him Jane's letter. The governor was affected by this frankness and promised to deliver it, if Louis would consent to his knowledge of the contents. On the following day, Julian was summoned by the governor, who conducted him secretly to the Prince's apartment; for the latter, being unable to obtain permission to answer in writing, had earnestly intreated that he might be at least allowed to converse, a few moments, with Jane's messenger. The in-

terview was a long one. The questions put by Louis, as to the Princess, grew out of each other, and every answer made him feel as much gratitude towards Jane as indignation against the Regent. Julian, on being interrogated respecting himself, seized with eagerness the opportunity of relating how he had been rescued from prison. This recital, which made the angelic soul of Jane completely manifest, drew tears from the Duke of Orleans, and deeply affected the governor, who nevertheless persisted in refusing to allow his prisoner's reply in writing, the King having expressly forbidden it. Louis, however, urgently intreated that he might be allowed to give Julian some pledge, which would at least prove to Jane that he had fulfilled his mission. To this the governor consented, and the Duke then gave him an impression of the seal, which represented the rose-tree so dear to the Princess.

After an absence of six weeks, Julian

returned to the castle, at which Jane resided. He was sure that she would not fail to go and take her seat every morning in the garden-chair, under the yoke-elm. He went, at her usual hour of walking—she was there. With his usual caution he conveyed to her a long letter, which he had written, and which contained an account of all that he had done, of all that the Prince had said, and of the gracious reception he had experienced. He did not forget to assure the Princess that as the King was now of age and beginning to reign in person, it was the general opinion that the Duke of Orleans would soon recover his liberty, and that such was the conviction of the governor. Julian's letter contained also the precious impression of the seal, which Jane beheld again with ecstasy. Louis had not, then, either lost or discarded it, but had carefully preserved it! The recollections attached to it, were still dear to him! He had displayed too the most lively sensibility in Julian's presence.

“ Oh, how unjust I was !” exclaimed she. “ Still he feels the same regard for me that he did. I ought to be satisfied—I can find no cause for affliction, except my captivity.”

These ideas occupied Jane’s mind deliciously all the rest of the day ; for in the midst of great misfortunes, we seize the first consolation with avidity, regarding it as a presage and annunciation of a period to our calamities.

In the evening Jane walked to the parterre, that she might contemplate the dead rose-tree. She had not allowed it to be removed, from respect for the dear hand that planted it. It appeared to her that no other person ought to touch the sacred shrub ; but, on casting her eyes towards it, she started. The tree was covered with fine full-blown roses. A gardener, whose back was turned towards her, was still at work. “ What is become of the dead rose-tree ?” de-

VOL. II.

E

manded Jane, in a tone of chagrin, "and who has planted this?"

"It was I, madam. *My master* ordered me to plant it," answered the gardener, turning round; and Jane recognised the faithful Julian. The manner, in which he pronounced the words "*My master ordered me to plant it,*" instantly convinced her that he alluded to the Duke of Orleans. He could not explain himself better before the two guards, who were thirty paces from Jane. "I myself will take care of it," exclaimed she. "Every night, at this hour, bring me a watering-pan." Julian, after having received the order, immediately withdrew. Jane remained a long time near the shrub, which she incessantly surveyed. On leaving it, she took from her hair a golden pin, and on the other side of the box wrote these words: "*Friendship restores to me existence.*"

The culture of this rose-tree gayed her

an additional opportunity of corresponding with Julian. She much wished him soon to undertake a second journey, but he informed her, by letter, that this was impossible in any other way than by his quitting the place altogether, for the principal gardener would not allow him leave of absence again. Jane, therefore, remained three months longer a prey to anxiety and uneasiness, for the King obstinately refused to receive any letters from her, and she was as strictly guarded as ever. At length, she authorised Julian's departure, and as he could not return, he promised to find some means of conveying to her intelligence of the Duke. At the same time, he implored her to arm herself with patience, and when the moment arrived, at which she should receive an answer, to expect some singular stratagem every day, in order that she might not be surprised, and betray herself.

Julian departed, and Jane was de-

prived of her faithful confidant ; but she experienced a great consolation in thinking that the Duke of Orleans would soon receive a large packet, written by her hand. At the expiration of a month, she began to count the days and hours, and to look attentively around her in the gardens and courts, which she sometimes crossed on her way to breakfast at the dairy. She was always in hopes of encountering some messenger, in disguise, sent by Julian. When she saw a new face, her heart beat violently—she looked steadfastly at the person, and more than once thought she perceived slight signs of being understood, from which error she was never released without extreme disappointment. Thus passed autumn and winter.—Jane sunk into a state of deep melancholy. Her imagination presented to her all the evils she feared, in the form of frightful realities. Sleep fled her couch, and she passed the days and nights in tears. Nevertheless, a

feeble ray of hope still remained, and always imparted interest to her walks.

One morning, as she was crossing the court on her way to the dairy, she perceived at a little door, which was partly open, a woman covered with rags who sued for alms, and whose person struck her as remarkable. Jane had obtained permission for this little door to be partly open to the poor when she passed through the court, so that they could put their hands through without entering. She was in the habit of sending alms by the guards, but the female beggar, on the present occasion, had trespassed beyond the prescribed limits, and the guards repulsed her with so much brutality that she fell in the court, and injured her head. Jane was indignant and hastened to her relief. She appeared to be in a swoon, and what was the emotion of the Princess, when, upon stricter examination, she recognised Julia, the wife of Julian ! She could not refrain from tears,

but the soldiers ascribed them solely to compassion. She assisted in raising the mendicant, whose eyes were still closed, but who closely grasped her hand. One of the guards brought a chair, on which the poor woman was seated, and Jane then desired him to go for a glass of water. When he was gone, the other centinel ran to shut the little door, and no sooner had he turned his back upon them, than Jane whispered: "We are alone." On hearing these words, Julia opened her eyes, and drew from her sleeve a letter which Jane seized and put into her bosom. At the same time, the Princess drew a ring from her finger and said: "This will prove that you have seen me. Go, faithful friend."

"To avoid suspicion," answered Julia, "I shall not come hither again."

"And my answer?" demanded Jane.

"Read the letter," said Julia, and more she could not say, for the guards returned. Jane herself, with the liveliest

gratitude, applied a healing embrocation to the head of Julia, which was but slightly hurt, and as she appeared to be a mendicant, the Duchess ordered a piece of gold to be given to her at her departure; then hastening to her chamber, she bolted the door, and precipitately opened the letter, which was from Julian, and which contained as follows:—

“ I have employed much time before I could find what I was in search of. During eight months the Duke has been transferred from one prison to another,* and in spite of my indefatigable zeal, I have not been able to obtain access to him. He is now in the Tower of Bourges,† in the custody of a Castellian-jailor, the sovereign lord of this prison, and a most ferocious brutal man. It is well known that the Duke is most unworthily treated,‡ though I have not been able to learn particulars. I advise you, madam, to write

* Historical.

† Historical.

‡ Historical.

a letter, soliciting an audience of the King. The moment is favorable, for his Majesty begins to shew symptoms of suspicion and inquietude. The credit of your enemies is on the decline. If, Madam, you can descend at midnight, without noise, by the private staircase, into the little court which is behind your apartment, and throw your letter to the King over the wall, which is not high, this letter will fall on the road and will be taken up, after which I have sure means of conveying it directly to his Majesty. Let it be fastened to a book sufficiently large but not too bulky, lest it should injure the person who will be waiting under the wall. May Heaven listen to the prayers of gratitude, and soon deliver the august Princess, whom generous compassion has so often led into the dungeons of despairing prisoners!"

Jane moistened with her tears the letter which acquainted her with the sad

situation of Louis, but resuming all the strength of mind, which she so eminently possessed, she exclaimed: "No, I will not sink beneath this terrible affliction, though a thousand times more cruel than all I have before endured. He has need of me, and I will make every effort to serve him." Accordingly, her thoughts were devoted to the means of following Julian's directions, but she found great difficulties in doing this, and such as would have appeared to any one else insurmountable. She first wrote a letter to the King, couched in the strongest and most touching language, conjuring him to grant her a private audience of half an hour. She attached this letter to a pamphlet, and thought it would be easy for her to throw it over a wall which was not very high. She procured a key of the door at the foot of the private stairs which led into the court, but in order to reach the top of these stairs, it was requisite to pass through a little room, in

which a centinel, who was seventy years of age, slept in his clothes. This man commanded all the other guards and his authority was unlimited. He was certainly a dangerous obstacle, but this did not deter Jane from her purpose. Every person in the castle had retired to rest at ten o'clock, herself excepted. Before eleven, she listened at the door of the soldier's chamber, and had the pleasure of hearing him snore most loudly. She then opened the door, and entered without making the least noise. There was a small lamp burning near the door of the stair-case. Jane, holding her breath and walking without shoes or stockings, happily reached this second door, which she opened without waking the guard. She extinguished the lamp, and in perfect darkness descended the stairs, holding in one hand the letter and in the other the key, by which she was to gain admittance into the court; but she no sooner put it into the lock than she heard

with terror the barking of two great dogs which had been let loose in the court, according to custom, at ten o'clock. The instinct of these animals caused them to feel the approach of foot steps which they could not even hear, and they ran furiously to the door. If Jane had now opened it, she must have been devoured. As her chamber was so situated that she could not hear these dogs, she was entirely ignorant that the court was guarded in so formidable a manner. Her astonishment equalled her grief and alarm. Her purpose was defeated. She put the letter in her pocket, and thought of nothing but how to regain her chamber without being perceived, if that were possible. She returned in despair through the same pitchy darkness—she rapidly re-ascended the stairs—she found the door still open—she re-entered the old centinel's chamber in a tremor, and unfortunately at the very moment that this man, whom the barking of the dogs had

roused, was leaping out of bed and crying : “ Holla, comrades ! Bring a light,” while he seized the drawn sword which lay at his side. By this movement which was as sudden as it was unexpected, and in total darkness, he met Jane who was passing close to him, and pierced her arm with the point of his sword. She fell, exclaiming : “ Oh !”—The terrified guard recognised her voice—his sword dropped from his grasp, and he stood petrified, believing he had killed the Princess.—At this moment, a great tumult was heard in the castle—every one hastily quitted his bed—the soldiers and domestics came running with flambeaux—Jane was seen with horror stretched on the floor and covered with blood.—She had not swooned, but was holding her handkerchief to her arm. Two female attendants ran to her and raised her—she leaned on their arms, and remaining on the same spot, said : “ I wished to go down into the court. This centinel

wounded me without knowing me—he is not to blame.”

The guard, who thought himself completely lost, felt such enthusiastic gratitude at seeing the first object of the Princess was his justification, that he threw himself at her feet in tears, exclaiming ; “ Oh madam, dispose of me at your pleasure. What can I do ? ”

“ Restore me to liberty,” answered Jane, encouraged by his look and manner. The centinel was silent, but he was evidently agitated, and gazed attentively at his royal prisoner. When people act thus, they are half won.

“ I by no means ask you to favor my escape,” continued Jane. “ I only wish to see the King my brother, who is deceived, and who would be indignant if he knew all that I have been doomed to endure, at this place, for a year. I know that he loves me and regrets my absence. When I shall have spoken to him for

only a quarter of an hour, he will reward all those who obeyed me.

“ Comrades,” said the old centinel, “ let us obey the sister of our King, who has always been so good and charitable.”

“ We will,” exclaimed the other soldiers. “ And so will we,” cried the domestics.

“ I take upon myself to provide for you all,” said Jane. “ Let me depart immediately for Paris. Conduct me to the King’s Palace. Put the horses to the carriage without loss of time.”

“ Directly,” replied all. “ You are our mistress, and we will do every thing you wish. Long live the Duchess of Orleans !”

This shout, which was a thousand times repeated, brought the Baroness de C** to the spot. She was received with universal hooting, while every one hastened to tell her that the Princess was free and about to depart. Alarmed and con-

founded, she humbly offered to accompany her Royal Highness.

“ No, madam,” replied Jane, “ I have no occasion for your services ; but be assured that I despise revenge too much to make any complaint against you ; and should the King learn from others with what harshness you have treated me, I will soften his indignation and you shall not experience its effects.”

Having spoken thus, she retired to her chamber, still supported by her attendants. They dressed her wound, which was slight, but as the arm was much swollen, she wore a sling. While she changed her dress, the two dogs, which had caused her so much alarm, were chained, and at the moment that the castle clock announced midnight, she descended into the court, escorted by her women and guards with flambeaux. She was certain that Julian's wife was waiting on the road. She caused the outer door to be opened, and crossing the threshold, called

to Julia in a loud voice. The latter was within ten paces of her, and surprise, mingled with fear, rendered her motionless.

“Come, my dear Julia,” exclaimed the Princess, “come. I am free and we will depart together.”

At these words, Julia ran towards the Princess, transported with joy, saying: “Approach Julian, you may shew yourself.” Julian now appeared, also disguised as a beggar. He had accompanied his wife that he might protect her, if necessary. Jane told him she was going to Paris.

“That is right, madam,” said he, “and I have a horse. I will precede you. Give me your letter for the King. He shall have it some hours before your arrival, and, you will be immediately received.”

Jane related her last adventure to Julian in few words, and he then hastened to mount his horse at a farm house in

the neighbourhood, where he had been three days concealed. It was a strange sight for all in the castle, when the woman covered with rags, who was recognised as the person to whom alms had been given in the morning, was so much caressed by the Princess, and stepped with her into the carriage. Jane departed at half-past twelve o'clock. During the journey she questioned Julia as to the means, by which Julian would convey her letter to the King.

“Through a very subaltern channel,” answered Julia, “though a very sure one, and you owe it, madam, to your own kindness. Among the servants of the royal wardrobe, there is one who obtained his appointment through you, and whom the King, on this account, distinguishes from all the rest. Julian spoke to him, and found him full of gratitude and zeal. He consented with pleasure to take charge of a letter, stating it would

be quite easy for him to put it into the King's own hand."

"A good lesson," said Jane, "for those who despise the inferior classes, among whom are often to be found so many virtues, because pride, luxury and ambition have not corrupted them. It is to persons of this description that I owe my deliverance, together with the possibility of softening and abridging the captivity of him, who is a thousand times dearer to me than life."

The Princess was within a league of Paris at ten o'clock in the morning. She stopped at a small retired country-house which belonged to Julian, having agreed with him that she would there wait for such intelligence as he might bring. That she might not be known, she had desired her servants not to wear her livery. They were dressed in grey, and her guards left her, at some distance from the house, to find quarters in a neighbouring village.

She kept no one with her but the old centinel who had wounded her. She retired to rest, and excessive fatigue made her sleep several hours.

At ten o'clock Julian arrived in high spirits. He caused the Princess to be woke, and a note sent into her room from the King, containing these words: "Come, my dear sister. I lament beyond measure all that you have endured. I have been cruelly imposed upon.—Come, my sister. I die with impatience to clasp you in my arms."

This note completed the joy of the Princess, for she saw in it the assurance that the persecution of Louis would at length end. She dressed herself in haste and departed. Her attendants, who had brought their clothes with them, now resumed their liveries, and she entered Paris in triumph, accompanied by her escort, which was now only a guard of honour. Julia, who was decently dressed, was in front of the carriage, and Julian

rode before it. A crowd collected in the streets through which she passed, expressing their astonishment and joy at seeing her again, and following the carriage with loud shouts of ; “ *Long live our good King! Long live the Duchess of Orleans!*” In the midst of an immense concourse of people, and universal transports, she arrived at the palace. At that moment, the Duchess de Beaujeu was entering the King’s cabinet. He had given her no intimation of what was about to happen, and felt a secret pleasure, while anticipating the effect which Jane’s appearance would have upon her. The Duchess de Beaujeu found five or six persons with the King, and the severe frigid look, with which he received her, caused her great uneasiness. She imagined that an unfavorable report of her had been made to her royal brother ; and examined the courtiers assembled round him, in order to discover, if possible, upon whom her resentment ought to

fall; when a noise without, which was distinctly heard in the cabinet, increased her inquietude. Her evil conscience, and the detestation of her on the part of the public, made her dreadfully afraid of any thing that resembled popular commotion. She could not conceal her alarm.

“ This noise,” said Charles with a bitter smile, “ need not alarm the pure and upright, for it only expresses admiration and love.”

As the King said these words, a great bustle was heard in the adjoining apartment. Suddenly the folding-doors of the cabinet flew open, and Jane appeared, feeble, depressed, languishing and with her arm in a sling. The Duchess of Beaujeu turned pale; she could neither speak nor move; her strength and haughtiness forsook her, and she almost fainted. —The King flew towards Jane, exclaiming: “ Oh, my dear sister!” —He took

her in his arms, pressed her to his heart, and mingled his tears with her's. After a few minutes, Charles, turning to Madame, darted at her a look full of indignation, and giving his arm to Jane, led her out of the cabinet into another room. There a long and frank explanation equally justified the brother and sister. Jane learnt that she had been accused of an intention to dethrone the King, and elevate the Duke of Orleans to his place. She also found that the King had written to her several times; consequently, it was evident that his letters had been intercepted. Charles rendered an account to her of many other calumnies, and finally protested that, in spite of his anger, he had never suffered any process to be instituted against the Duke of Orleans, and that he had constantly given orders for him to be treated in prison with all possible respect and attention. Jane shed a flood of tears, while she an-

nounced to him that her lord was groaning in the Tower of Bourges under the most odious oppression.

“Sister,” returned Charles, “if you have not been abused and this report prove true, I will abridge the time that I had fixed for his captivity, and punish with the utmost rigour the cruel author of these indignities?”

“Oh my brother,” said Jane, “I shall never ask you to punish. A woman should solicit nothing but pardon—and shall I not obtain this entirely for the husband of your sister?”

“The idea of what you have suffered,” answered the King, “and the state, in which I see you, wound my heart. You have always a claim on my affections, of which henceforth no one shall deprive you. I repeat my promise that I will abridge the captivity of the Duke of Orleans. I had fixed it at twenty years—Do not start. He has already been two years in prison, and I give you my word

that he shall be at liberty before he has been three; but after his revolt, this remaining portion of rigour is necessary. If you reflect, you yourself will acknowledge that I cannot extend my clemency further."

At these words Jane heaved a deep sigh. "I propose," continued the King, "to go with you to Bourges,* as soon as you have taken a little repose."

"I am by no means fatigued," answered Jane, "I am ready to set out. My unfortunate husband is enduring hardships. Can I wish to delay my journey a moment?"

"Enough," said the King. "We will go very soon, then." At these words, Jane threw her arms round her brother's neck. It was agreed that she should only leave him for three hours, and that they should then take their departure. She

* Historical.

did not forget, in the course of this interview, to mention her liberators, Julian, his wife, and the *valet* of the ward robe. The King, who was much moved by the recital, commissioned her to announce a pension to each of these persons, besides which he stated that he would bestow on Julian a lucrative and honorable office. Jane, on her part, liberally recompensed her guards and the domestics of the castle.

The Duchess de Beaujeu wrote to the King, who returned no answer to her letter, and refused to see her. The report of her disgrace, which had been circulated from the first moment of Jane's restoration to favour, deprived her of all her creatures, for she had no friends. All the court repaired to Jane's palace, while Madame shut herself up in her own, and gave way to excessive alarm. She feared every thing from the animosity of the people, and dared neither go out nor shew herself.

Charles, being unable to dispatch his business before ten o'clock in the evening, wished Jane to devote this night to repose, and wrote to inform her that he could not set out 'till six o'clock in the morning. The secret of this sudden excursion was perfectly kept. No one had a suspicion of it. The King and Jane stepped into a carriage, without there being at court the least suspicion of a journey, by which so many things were destined to be unveiled.* What was Jane's agitation on the road! How slowly she seemed to travel! How often she urged the postillions to quicken their pace, and calculated the number of leagues she had yet to go! As she approached Bourges, her impatience gradually increased with her emotion—she was about to see the object of an attachment so faithful and passionate, after three years of the most afflicting absence.

* Historical.

—But in what a state was she about to find him! A prisoner and persecuted—while she could only lighten his sufferings, but not end them by procuring his liberation. She was so much oppressed that it was not possible for her to speak to, and answer the King; she could only press his hand which she held between her own, and bathe it with tears.—Charles, who was naturally of a feeling disposition, was himself much moved.

It was almost midnight when they arrived at Bourges, but they immediately went to the Tower, the gates of which at once flew open when the King's name was announced. His Majesty entered, with the trembling arm of Jane resting upon his. The keeper of this prison, the inflexible and cruel Guerin,* ran half dressed to meet the royal visitors—his confusion and paleness made Jane



* Historical.

F 2

shudder. "Where is the Duke of Orleans?" demanded she.

"Conduct us to his apartment," said the King.

"Sire," replied the stammering gaoler, "I will inform his Royal Highness."—

"No," interrupted Charles. "Conduct us to him, I say."

"Sire, the orders, which I received in your Majesty's name," returned Guerin, "were strict and rigorous."

"You might know, then," observed the King, "that they did not proceed from me. I am incapable of giving such orders to a prince of my own blood, and especially my brother-in-law."

"Madame, the regent," said the keeper.

"For two years there has been no Regent," answered the King. "I reign, and I shall punish those who deserve it."

"Again," said Jane, "I ask where he is."

"Madam," replied Guerin, "by the

express order of the Duchess de Beaujeu he is—but only during the night—he is in a subterraneous apartment.

“ A dungeon!” exclaimed Jane. “ Great Heaven!” Sobbing, she sunk upon the King’s bosom, and seemed as if almost incapable of bearing up against what she heard, but suddenly collecting herself, she exclaimed: “ Oh my brother, let us hasten to release him.”

Charles now turned to the gaoler, and in a dreadful voice ordered him instantly to shew the way to the dungeon. The wretch was overpowered by terror and threw himself at the feet of Jane, repeating that he had only acted in conformity to the reiterated orders sent by the Duchess de Beaujeu.* Charles was obliged to promise that he should not lose his life, in order to impart the strength which was necessary. This

* Historical.

did not, however, enable him to walk. Two footmen, with flambeaux, took him in their arms, and carried him the way that he described in broken accents. Jane and the King, escorted by all those who had accompanied them on horseback, descended into the subterraneous part of the prison. They entered a gloomy and humid cavern, where a sight, the most horrible and unexpected, caught every eye and rendered every spectator motionless. It was an iron cage placed at the extremity of the cavern, and through the bars Louis was seen asleep in a straw-chair.* He was awoken by the noise and glare of the flambeaux. "Do you come," said he "to release me from this load of life?"

"Oh Louis!" exclaimed Jane, precipitating herself in agony towards the cage, which had just been opened.

"Liberating angel," answered Louis,

* Historical.

“ is it thy celestial voice that I hear?”— While saying these words, he stretched out his arms—Jane rushed to him, and he knelt to receive her. “ The King is here,” said she. “ He is come in person to take you from this horrible place. Oh that I had but been with you all the time you have been here !”

More she could not say, for she fell in a swoon upon the bosom of Louis. No one was now seen or thought of but herself. Indignation, resentment and all other feelings were suspended. The King and the Duke carried her into the grand apartment of the Tower, where she was placed upon a couch. She immediately recovered the use of her senses, and felt delighted in finding that she was in the arms of her husband and brother. Louis, without thinking at first of gratitude to the King, gave vent to the feelings inspired by the tenderness of Jane, then sinking on his knee before his sovereign, he said: “ Sire, I call Heaven

to witness that I have ever entertained for your Majesty the sentiments of a loyal subject, and made war only against the Regent.—Still I grant that I set a bad example and was highly culpable—I have, therefore, no right to complain. I feel, at this moment, nothing but your Majesty's goodness. Your presence and that of my incomparable wife indemnify me for all I have endured."

"Brother," returned the King, presenting his hand, "you have been guilty of a great fault, but it is more than sufficiently expiated. I trust that you have not ascribed to me the barbarous treatment you have endured. I cannot again permit you to appear at court, but you shall not be an oppressed prisoner. My sister shall divide her time between us, and you may fix upon the fortress you chuse to inhabit."

"Sire," answered the Duke, "if agreeable to your Majesty, I will remain here; but I earnestly implore you to

pardon Dunois, who made every effort in his power to prevent my error, and only accompanied me because he was determined to share my fate."

"I pardon him," said Charles. "Thank my sister for it."

"Angelic Jane," exclaimed Louis, "how could I complain when it is my destiny to owe every thing to you!—Alas," continued he, "when I separated myself from you, I lost all; but I bless my misfortunes, because they have completely brought your sublime virtues to light. Of what importance is it that I inhabit a dungeon, if you appear in it? Do you not bring with you celestial bliss? Oh, you will never know the sweetness and charm of the attachment you inspire! It is a feeling which has in it something divine, for it is, doubtless, ardent and impassioned gratitude, which constitutes the real beatitude of angels and the elect."

At these words, Jane seized the hand

of Louis as well as that of the King, and joining them together, said while she clasped them between her own: "Sire, when you hear him speak thus, your heart pardons him, I am certain."

"Yes," answered Charles, "such sentiments make ample reparation. But I wish to know all you have endured."

Louis then stated that, during the eight months which he had passed in the Tower, he had always occupied a tolerable apartment during the day, but that every night, Guerin came, with a dozen armed men, and conducted him to the iron cage in the subterraneous dungeon.*

"The wretch!" exclaimed the King. "In this horrible prison shall he pass the remainder of his days."

"Sire," replied Louis, "he has only obeyed the positive orders he received, for I myself have seen them, and they

* Historical.

were regularly signed. The real barbarity is not his."

"Oh my brother," said Jane, "on this day which will form, in my life, an epoch equally afflicting and dear—on this day, which has reunited us all three, let no tears flow but those of penitence and gratitude—let no one be consigned to despair."

The King assigned the power of punishing Guerin to Louis, who contented himself with immediately expelling him from the Tower of Bourges. The Duke having expressed his wish to pass the remainder of his imprisonment at this fortress, he obtained permission to send for his old servants, as well as all who were attached to him. The King remained more than five hours in the prison, chusing to acquaint Louis with all the particulars of Jane's admirable conduct. At length he departed, for the purpose of returning to Paris.

When Louis found himself alone with Jane, he exclaimed: "At length, then, I may speak to you and open my whole heart—that heart which henceforth is entirely your's and which for five hours has, with so much difficulty, repressed its sentiments."

"Have you not," said Jane, "already told me every thing that can satisfy my tenderness, and cause me to forget my pain?"

"No," replied Louis, falling at her feet, "I have told you nothing.—What a secret did you conceal from me? I loved and admired you as a being perfectly *unique* in this world, and yet I only knew a portion of your heroic generosity. Of what happiness has your delicacy deprived me, and for how many years! I knew not how far disinterested sensibility could go. How often have I profaned the name of love! It is neither pure nor perfect, except in your soul.

In a word, I possess the letters which you wrote to the Countess de Dunois, and have read them all."

Jane no sooner heard this declaration than her emotion became so violent that she was incapable of uttering a single word. Louis knew her sentiments, and spoke to her with impassioned feeling. It was no longer a friend, but a lover, whom she thought that she beheld at her feet, and could she, at this moment, have seen what was passing in his heart, she would not have doubted it; for gratitude has its intoxication, as well as love, but the source of it is so pure that, even while it is dissipating itself, far from exhausting the soul, it leaves a delicious impression which resembles the testimony of a good conscience. Jane did not long remain under the influence of this enchantment, for the leading idea of her mind dispelled the sweet illusion. She recollected the violent passion, felt by Louis for Anne of Brittany, and this

recollection fixed her lot. The gratitude of the Duke might mitigate its hardship, but could not alter it. Though totally deprived of hope, she felt a secret pleasure in now having nothing to conceal from the object of her affections. She felt sure that he must sincerely pity her; and that the affection, which he felt for another, must serve to make him know the grandeur of her sacrifice and the extent of the generous consent to their divorce which she had given. At the same time, fearing to yield to the gratification of expressing the sentiments which she had so long concealed, which he could not return, and which she, therefore, thought a weakness, she was almost as much embarrassed as if her affection had been reprehensible. Blushing, and with downcast eyes, she acknowledged a passion which she could no longer deny, but it was in timid and constrained language, a thousand times less tender than that which she had hi-

therto employed to express nothing beyond esteem. Louis, who listened to her and gazed at her with indescribable rapture, instead of replying, rose and walked to a *secretaire* at a little distance, from which he took a small casket; then approaching her, he said: "This casket, which I have never opened since I read your letters, contains a miniature given to me by the Duke of Brittany, unknown to her whom it represents. I have only preserved it that I might sacrifice it to you.—Take it, and be assured that the recollection of all you have done for me is sufficient to efface this image from my recollection."

"I accept it as a deposit," said Jane.

"Talk not thus," exclaimed Louis warmly, "or I will dash it to pieces at your feet."

"Enough," answered Jane, putting forth her trembling hand. "I consent."

At these words, a sudden unexpected sensation of uneasiness seized the Duke,

and his attempts to conceal it only tended to increase it.—He presented the casket, and Jane saw that he turned pale.—How genuine and heart-rending is the remorse, inspired by love !—Louis had sacrificed Anne from feelings of enthusiastic esteem for Jane—he thought he had done a generous action ; and now he saw nothing but Anne in all her charms—he heard nothing but her—he felt as if he was the most guilty and the most unfortunate of men. Oppressed at the heart and overwhelmed with consternation, he threw himself into a chair, without being able to articulate a single word. The unhappy Princess too well perceived what was passing in his soul, and suffered still more acutely than himself ; but that she might not add to his painful embarrassment, she affected an air of calmness. She did not attempt to conceal that she saw his regret and anguish, for he would not have given credit to this ; but she thought (and with reason) that he would take it kindly if she

did not speak to him on the subject. Such is the weakness resulting from the passions, that we are obliged to humour them, even when there is no hope of deceiving the person who is under their influence.

After a silence of a few moments, Jane tried to raise her timid feeble voice, and said : “ You have read my letters ; if you have discovered in them any expression of involuntary feeling, you have also seen firmness and decision which nothing can shake—you have seen that your happiness is to me every thing. I shall never swerve from this. Nothing can induce me to alter the resolutions which render me worthy of your esteem. I am satisfied with the station which I occupy in your heart, and prefer it to any other, when I reflect that it is impossible to expel me from it. Now that you know all my secrets, you shall be the confidant of all my thoughts, and you will find that I am infinitely less to be pitied than

you imagine. Your noble generous soul will easily conceive that the glory of extraordinary devotion may sweeten the bitterness of the greatest sacrifice."

At these words Jane rose, and without waiting for any answer retired to the apartment prepared for her. Louis was almost annihilated, and had no power to detain her.

"Great God!" exclaimed he, as soon as she was gone, "what a destiny is mine! Oh, how I envy this unequalled woman, who has only nourished a pure legitimate passion that she might sacrifice every thing for me, and find her reward in the most unexampled act of devotion. —She has doubtless felt affliction, but in the consoling bosom of religion she has learnt to double her strength and fortitude. She has wept, but she has never shed the bitter scalding tears of remorse. —Ever proceeding with steady pace in the path of duty, she imparts sublimity to her sacrifices. —Ever at peace with

herself, she enjoys the delicious tranquillity of an unsullied conscience.—But I!—What must become of me, situated as I am between two duties and two sentiments equally dear, equally sacred, the fatal collision of which destroys every virtue of my nature? It is no longer possible for me to act generously. I have no choice but between ingratitude and perjury.”

These reflections plunged Louis into such profound distress that, in spite of the happy events which had just occurred, he was still more to be pitied than when he was confined in the iron cage. He had, however, presented Anne's portrait to Jane, and this was a formal pledge that he would renounce her. It is true that Jane announced the design of persisting in her conduct, but that her husband might prove the rectitude of his intentions, he thought it his duty to urge the consummation of the tie which he had formerly wished to dissolve, and

how could she oppose this, now that her secret was known?

Jane was, on her part, in the most violent agitation.—The moment that she reached her chamber, she opened the fatal casket, and fearfully directed her eyes towards the miniature, which represented the most enchanting and most perfect countenance, of which imagination can form an idea.—She gazed at it in great emotion, but tears soon hid it from her view.

“ Her soul,” said Jane, “ is described to be as pure as this countenance is fascinating—and shall I accept the sacrifice of a sentiment, inspired by such a woman?—No, no.—To hide myself from public observation, to bury myself in profound solitude, to weep in silence and to offer up prayers for their happiness—such be my future employment. I submit to it not only without despair, but without a murmur.—Of what, indeed,

should I complain? Has he not sacrificed to me this miniature?—He shall be happy—he shall owe his happiness to me. —Is there none on earth but such as love affords?—Have I not experienced that divine consolation which pours a salutary balsam into the soul's most grievous wounds? Oh, what gratifications can beneficence also bestow, especially in the rank which Providence has allotted to me!”

During this soliloquy her hands were clasped together and her eyes raised towards Heaven. Her tears flowed copiously, but they were not tears of distress. She sunk into a deep reverie—she retraced the past, without finding one action on her part that was censurable. She recollected with delight that her kindness to every one had been uniform ; she saw how much good she might do in future, and she ceased to repine at her lot.

Louis was afraid of seeing her again ;

but the perfect serenity of her look and mien restored him in some degree to himself. He was about to renew his protestations, but she interrupted him.

“Your gratitude and esteem,” said she, “have made me the arbiter of your destiny. It is an office which I accept with transport, and of which you cannot deprive me without injustice.—Let me, then, dispose of you. I neither accept nor refuse the sacrifice you offer to make; but as you feel for a Princess, worthy of being loved, a passion which I myself have authorised, and which she returns from a confidence in my word, I will continue to be only your sister and your friend, ever ready to fulfil my promises, but leaving you at liberty in all respects. On this subject, therefore, let us hold no further conversation. I require it, and venture to say that I have a right to require it. If I thought and acted otherwise, I should be contemptible in my

own eyes.—Let that declaration suffice; it will convince you, I am sure, that my resolution is unalterable.”

This language, so firm, so noble, and at the same time so wise, solaced at once the conscience and the heart of Louis. He had still the merit of having displayed generosity, yet remained free without the embarrassment of accepting a great sacrifice, or opposing the intention of making it. He ceased to be culpable, and time alone, not his will, was to decide his fate. He adored Jane for the ingenious act of kindness, by which she absolved him without his feeling any humiliation. From this moment their conversation resumed all its former charms, with an additional interest—that of mutually relating the most remarkable adventures which had occurred to them during so long an absence.

At noon, Louis and Jane wished to descend into the dungeon, for the purpose of seeing the iron cage broken to

pieces in their presence, Charles having ordered it to be destroyed. Louis caused the prisoners in the Tower to be assembled, that they might witness an occurrence, in which all were interested. Their loud acclamations expressed the joy they experienced in seeing the destruction of the frightful cage, devised by cruelty and despotism. Jane looked at these prisoners with feelings of compassion, especially when she felt that they had been companions in misfortune with the Duke of Orleans. She interrogated them and received several petitions from them. She wrote to the court in their behalf, and ultimately obtained the release of many.

The Duke of Orleans felt lively satisfaction in sending a courier to Dunois, announcing that the King granted him pardon, liberty and the restitution of his property.

Jane passed six months with Louis; she then returned to court by the King's

orders, and on the same day Dunois rejoined the Prince, to whom he wished to devote the liberty he had regained. Jane did not find the Duchess de Beaujeu at court, this lady having precipitately retired to her estate at Chantelle,* where she learnt, with indescribable alarm, that Charles and Jane were gone together to Bourges. She wrote the most submissive letters to the King, ascribing all she had done to zeal for him. Her royal brother replied that nothing could be an excuse for barbarity, and that the only true mode of shewing attachment to a sovereign was by endeavouring to make him beloved. He added that he could not persuade himself to banish from his court the woman who had presided over his education, that she was at liberty to return, but that he required of her, for the future, not to take any part in the government and not to mingle in public affairs.†

* Historical.

† Historical.

When the ambitious can approach Kings, they still cherish hope. Madame returned.—She was in disgrace, and therefore Jane went to her, but made no reproaches and appeared in public with her.—Madame, humiliated as she was by this generous conduct, abandoned by all her partisans, and without personal consideration or credit, concealed her rage and resentment, affected perfect carelessness and serenity, attracted a crowd of guests by splendid *fêtes*, paid assiduous court to the King, and consoled herself with the possibility of still adroitly insinuating herself into the favor of the monarch, whom she had no longer the right of approaching with her counsils.

Jane, who had long wished to provide herself with a final asylum, had obtained from the Pope the requisite permission to found a convent for nuns, who were to bear the name of *Annonciades*.* She

* Historical.

established this monastery at Bourges, a place dear to her on more than one account. The late King had been born there; he had loaded her with favors, and she revered his memory. Louis too still inhabited the Tower of this city. Jane, consecrating to religion the modest colour which she always wore, allotted a grey dress to her nuns, and being declared the superior of this new order, she promised to come every year and pass some weeks with the sisterhood.* While employed, in this religious and benevolent object she did not forget Julian, but obtained for him an office of importance, by which he made a fortune. Louis also conferred on him marks of distinction, which to a heart like his were truly gratifying.

The exile of Louis continued nearly another year, and Jane, at different periods, passed a great portion of it with him.

* Historical,

She became every day so necessary to him that, when she quitted him, it appeared as if she carried away with her all his peace of mind, and all the happiness of his life. He then believed that his attachment to her could be compared with no other affection.

“ It is impossible, without folly,” said he to Dunois, “ that I can waver between two sentiments, one of which embellishes only a solitary season of life, while the other may endure without diminution ’till I sink into the tomb. What companion can be like this woman, heroic in misfortune, courageous amidst the most appalling reverses, and ever ingeniously active in doing good — this woman, who is so indulgent as to those weaknesses, from which she herself is exempt, and whose society is at the same time so delightful from the stores of her mind; her delicacy, her sensibility, her equanimity? Who can supply her place to me? Who will ever love me as she does?”

Thus spoke and thought Louis for a few days, whenever Jane left him; but when alone, without any employment to occupy his mind, other ideas occurred to his wandering imagination. The recollection of Anne and all the pangs of love assailed him, plunging him again into a state of irresolution, the more painful because it was by no means consonant with his character. It was, in fact, produced by the combats which took place in his heart, between two sentiments incapable of according with each other. The news which he received from Brittany, two months before his departure from Bourges, added to his indecision. He had left a female friend at that court, who was a lady in constant attendance on the Princess and her confidante. A letter from this lady at length reached him, by which he evidently perceived that several others had been intercepted. It announced that the Princess had long been the victim of profound melancholy, and that

nothing could alter her sentiments as to the Duke of Orleans. This last passage was indelibly engraved in his heart. It re-illuminated the flame in his bosom, and brought back all the misery of his singular and afflicting situation.

At length he left the Tower of Bourges, and set out for Paris, accompanied by Jane and the Count de Dunois. He entered the capital during the night, in order to avoid any scenes of public enthusiasm, which his unexpected arrival would not have failed to produce. When their number is small, men are generally egotists; but in large masses they like to intoxicate themselves with admiration of some one—they want an object of worship. Such is human nature in reality, and the multitude always prove it. Man is created, then, to acknowledge, to love and to revere a supreme power, and happy is he if he neither profanes his homage nor his enthusiasm.

The Duke of Orleans could not escape

the anxiety of the Parisians, in spite of the precautions suggested by his prudence and modesty. No sooner was his return known than the people surrounded his palace, stationed themselves at the gates, and awaited his appearance with tumultuous impatience. When he at length came forward, he was greeted with shouts of transport.

The King received Louis with that affability so impressive in Princes, that generous delicacy and kindness which do not make a person seem as if he were granting pardon, but as if he had entirely forgot the transgression which rendered one necessary. The Duchess de Beaujeu felt that, on such an occasion, nobody would be imposed upon by artifice, and that the best air she could assume was one of distance and loftiness. Without having regained her former consequence, this woman had again contrived to acquire some influence over the young monarch. He no longer kept her at a distance, but

saw her every day, and among Princes, this constant easy intercourse always begets a degree of intimacy and confidence. The tenacity, which it authorises, is a species of favor, and perhaps, among them, a most useful one.

The Duchess, for a long time, but only by insinuations, had inspired Charles with a wish to marry Anne of Brittany. The Prince, who was not aware how repeatedly she had advised this step, one day confided to her that he had resolved on preferring the Princess of Brittany to all those who had been proposed to him. Madame affected great surprise at this declaration, appearing at the same time as if she felt that any advice on her part was interdicted, and therefore remaining silent. Charles, however, requested a reply to his communication.

“Are you then ignorant,” said she, that the Duke of Orleans, imposed upon by the artifices of the Duke of Brittany,

persisted in his revolt from no other motive than the hope of marrying Anne and repudiating my sister?"

"Of what importance is that to me?" returned the King.

"Surely of much," answered Madame, "for the passion on his part still exists and the Princess returns it."

"Returns it!" exclaimed Charles.
"That I do not believe."

"I have proofs of it," said the Duchess, "in letters addressed to the Duke, which were intercepted."

"Letters from the Princess?" demanded the King.

"No," answered his insidious sister, "but from one of the ladies near her person, who is the confidante of both parties. Hence arises my irreconcilable aversion to this odious man, who at the same time that he rebelled against his sovereign, my brother and my pupil, wished to repudiate my sister.—I have allowed myself to be accused of injustice

and barbarity; I have had the moderation never to speak of these letters out of regard to my sister ; but I have preserved them and will deposit them in your hands ; for I feel it a sacred duty to acquaint you with every thing which bears reference to the Princess whom you wish to espouse. You will see nothing in these letters, which can create in your mind a bad opinion of her. The inclination towards the Duke of Orleans was secretly authorised by her father. She was persuaded that several circumstances rendered his marriage null and void, nay, that my sister herself, wished a divorce to take place ; but I have ascertained that for some months the Princess of Brittany has been better informed, and has triumphed over the unfortunate attachment. She is so pious and so virtuously inclined, that you can have no fears as to futurity, if you have the prudence, as I do not doubt, to keep the Duke of Orleans constantly at a distance

from court. If he remained here, he would indisputably fail in any infamous attempt to seduce your consort, but still he might injure her reputation."

This malignant language made but too strong an impression on the King's mind; he demanded the letters. Madame went for them and delivered them, with some final comments, calculated to sow the seeds of jealousy in the heart of Charles. He felt, however, real affection for Jane, and his confidence in her was unlimited. Madame, therefore, suspected that he would open his heart to her, and as she was ignorant of her sister's secret motives, being herself incapable of divining such an act of generous devotion, she was persuaded that if the confidence of the King did not give rise to a complete quarrel between the Duke and Duchess of Orleans, it would at least cause a misunderstanding between them of no common nature, and that the Duke perceiving coldness on the part of

the King, would do something by which his ruin might be effected. In fact, Charles was incapable of disguising his grief, and being closely questioned by Jane, confessed all. She could not hear with indifference that her brother was about to marry her rival, for it was an event of the greatest importance to her; nor could she refrain from indulging a secret satisfaction, which was soon repressed by a thousand uneasy thoughts as to futurity.—Not being able to justify her lord, but by revealing his secrets, she avowed them all—at least all that personally related to herself, and told his story in such a way as placed his character in the best point of view. The only exception was that she did not mention the miniature of Anne. She threw upon the Duke of Brittany all the false hopes he had caused in the mind of her husband, and tried to persuade the King that the Princess had only felt for Louis the simple preference which a virtuous

young woman might easily entertain for her destined husband. Lastly, she did not forget to dwell upon the sacrifice he had made in her own favour, by renouncing the attachment altogether, which she stated to be absolutely the case. She made no reflections on the conduct of Madame, bearing always in mind that they were sisters, and leaving to high Heaven the office of undeceiving the King as to her infamous character. This explanation, which occupied nearly four hours, sensibly affected Charles, and doubled his affection for a sister so worthy of it. Jane, in this long interview, justified the Duke of Orleans, and calmed the jealousy of her royal brother, without however entirely removing it.

While Charles and Jane resigned themselves to the sweet effusions of reciprocal confidence, Madame was seated alone in her apartment. Since she had lost the sovereign power, she did not possess a single real friend ; but she had preserved

a great number of spies, and had formed a little secret council of informers. Surrounded by these and listening to them, she fancied that she was still a leading member of government. She knew that the King was closeted with Jane. When she calculated the hours which had elapsed since the beginning of this conference, she easily imagined that Charles had revealed all, and she glowed with impatience to know the result of the interview. While thus a prey to anxiety, the folding-doors of the room opened and the Duchess of Orleans was announced. Madame was delighted, not doubting that she came to vent her resentment against the Duke, and join in effecting his destruction. With this idea she rose, and ran towards her sister with open arms, but Jane drew back and said: "No perfidious demonstrations of regard, Madam! You have used unlimited authority to intercept letters, as well as to plunge into dungeons, and to

confine in iron cages the unfortunate objects of your unjust and barbarous enmities. I had pardoned all that you had caused the Duke of Orleans to endure, for you had no longer any share in the government and were in disgrace; but I perceive that you still wish to persecute him, and that you think yourself possessed of the power to execute your design. In this respect, however, you deceive yourself. The King is just and upright—he loves me—he listens to me—I shall always be able to defeat your plots. I have justified the Duke of Orleans, and he possesses the perfect esteem of his sovereign. I am ignorant as to court-intrigue, but I know how to defend the man I love, and I will prove that, under the government of a generous and humane monarch, there is a degree of firmness and power in the upright which the wicked may dread.”

Having spoken thus, the Princess turned and disappeared, leaving Madame

in a state of astonishment equalled only by her anger.

Jane, from a very natural delicacy, would not announce to Louis the projected marriage of the King, but it soon became a general topic of conversation, and he experienced a feeling of vexation and chagrin which it was not in his power to conceal. Far from opening his heart to Jane, he was so unjust as to behave towards her with coldness and ill-humour. He knew her amiable disposition, but he also knew that, in the most perfect people, their conduct is often more generous than their sentiments; and it is this which constitutes the merit of most of our actions. There would be no sacrifices, if the heart were always in unison with our conduct. Thus Jane had been capable of giving a full consent to her own divorce, and yet she saw with internal satisfaction that her rival was about to form another connection. In great affliction, it is with difficulty that

we support the presence of those who find any advantage in what causes our pain. Louis avoided Jane, and this unhappy Princess, who saw what was passing in his heart, ascertained with mournful astonishment that his passion for Anne, which she had thought nearly extinct, was as violent as ever.

Six months afterwards, the negotiations with Brittany were terminated, the marriage of the King was solemnly proclaimed, and the Princess arrived at Paris. What a moment for Jane, when she for the first time appeared in the presence of the woman who had long occupied her thoughts! How beautiful did Anne appear, and how did Jane's emotions increase when she saw Louis, who was minutely observed by the King and Madame, turn pale and betray evident confusion as he cast his eyes on her!—Anne blushed, but her conduct was perfect, because it was simple and natural. She received all the royal family graciously,

but treated Louis with a slight increase of politeness, as if she did not wish to conceal that they were far from being strangers. Had she been colder, she would have indicated a fear of recalling former times, and afforded scope for malignant interpretations. She afterwards paid attention to the other persons who surrounded her, and appeared to be very animated. And was it without effort and design, that she thus conducted herself? Certainly not; but it was without deception. Her behaviour was the result of delicacy devoid of artifice. Women, being accustomed from infancy to restrain sentiments and emotions of this nature, have naturally a command over themselves, which men cannot have. The modesty, which makes them so timid, becomes then their strength. Like all the virtues, it elevates the soul, and renders them capable of suppressing or disguising the secret movements of the heart which do not accord with their

duties. The unhappy Duke of Orleans departed, after this interview, irrecoverably the slave of love, and overwhelmed with affliction. He could not conquer his fatal attachment by seeing the amiable object of it almost every day, and he would not leave the capital, lest his absence should be construed into exile. Embarrassed with Jane, dissatisfied with himself, and subjugated by a hopeless passion, he sunk into a state of melancholy which was but too much observed. The King no longer felt any regard for the Duchess of Beaujeu. Her hatred of the Duke of Orleans made him dubious as to every thing she reported against the Prince; but this animosity was, nevertheless, a surety to the King that he would be apprised of every thing which could displease him. He resolved not to believe any communication of this nature, upon slight grounds, and persuaded himself that he should always be able to distinguish between truth and ca-

lunny. This is a great error and it is the error of many Princes. When they are sufficiently enlightened to be well convinced that their august character and dignity impose upon them the law of never listening to informers; or the enemies of those whom they wish to know, they are seldom unjust, because they are then no longer abused. The extreme youth of Charles was his excuse in this respect; besides he was in love, uneasy, jealous, and weak enough to lend an ear to the perfidious insinuations of Madame, receiving every impression that she wished to make. She first endeavoured to obtain the confidence of the Queen, who as yet knew no one at the French court; but her advances were received with extreme coldness, and she lost all hope when she saw her Majesty becoming intimate with the Duchess of Orleans. From this moment she regarded the Queen as her enemy, and employed all the artifice and malignity of her character

against that august lady. Under the pretext of telling the King what was generally reported, she pretended that the melancholy, displayed by the Duke of Orleans, was affectation, and in reality nothing but a perpetual public declaration of love to the Queen, which her Majesty ought to be much offended at, and treat with marked disdain. She added that, according to universal rumour, Jane was, by a species of false generosity, at once romantic and criminal, the confidante of the Duke of Orleans, and that her intimacy with the Queen was thought at least ridiculous and misplaced. All these observations and many other of the same nature poisoned the mind of a young inexperienced Prince. He became gloomy and thoughtful when with the Queen and Jane. To the Duke of Orleans he displayed a degree of ill temper which he had never before seen, and at last went so far as to tell Jane that her constant intercourse with the Queen displeased him.

These two Princesses felt for each other that solid esteem which is so easily formed and so durably established by a similarity of sentiment, a congeniality of taste and the sympathy of virtue. By a sort of tacit convention between them, the name of the Duke of Orleans was never mentioned in their conversation, nor did they ever say a word which bore reference to him. Benevolent projects constituted the general theme of their discourse. Anne made several donations to churches by Jane's advice; she conceived the design of reforming the hospitals, of which it was decided that she should share the inspection and superintendence with Jane. She planned the institution of the *Dames de la Cordeliere*, which she established a short time afterwards.*

Jane, who was equally unhappy as to her husband and brother, resolved upon going to pass some time with her nuns

* Historical.

at Bourges. She thought that Louis would perhaps miss her; she designed to write frequently to him, feeling that she could state many things by letter which she could not venture to mention in person; and lastly, she was convinced that she should find, in pious solitude, those religious consolations which were become more necessary to her than ever. Louis appeared to be surprised and painfully affected when she asked his permission to go to Bourges; and when she was gone, he felt as if she had abandoned him. This idea completely crushed him. Dunois likewise announced that she was going to spend a fortnight at his castle for the purpose of causing a superb marble tomb to be constructed, in which the remains of the Countess were to be deposited. This tomb had been ordered by Jane, and the most skilful artists of the age were employed on it. The departure of Dunois appeared to Louis like another abandonment of him; for when

the heart is deeply afflicted, every thing wounds it and doubles its anguish. Louis, when he convinced himself that Jane was become indifferent as to his fate, thought he was left alone in the universe.

“ I will never recal her,” said he. “ She has ceased to love me, and I deserve it. She has forgotten the unhappy attachment which she once felt, and even the constancy of Dunois is worn out. There is not a soul in the world, on whose esteem I can rely, and life must henceforth be to me a state of insipid vegetation.”

These thoughts tortured his soul and drove him to misanthropy, till at length he adopted the resolution of shutting himself in one of his country houses, a dozen leagues from Paris.

While he was thus, with dissatisfied ill humour, accusing a heart which was incapable of change, Jane sorrowfully pursued her way, thinking of him alone. It was the decline of day and towards the

end of June, when she arrived at Bourges. The nuns, who had been more than a year deprived of her presence, received her with great joy. They informed her, the same evening, that a few days after her last departure, an unknown lady of extraordinary beauty, and recommended by the Archbishop, had been admitted as a novice, that she had bestowed several considerable gifts on the monastery, that she concealed her name and family, that she edified the whole convent by her fervent piety, and that having finished her noviciate, she was to pronounce her vows on the succeeding day. She had entered the convent under the humble name of *Madeline*. As she was preparing herself in private for the ceremony of her profession, Jane did not express a wish to see her, but it was decided that the Princess was, on the following day, to invest her with the black veil. When all the nuns had retired to rest, Jane left her apartment to wander

alone through the cloister. In about half an hour, finding herself at one of the church-doors and perceiving that it was partly open, she entered this gothic building. It was only lighted by a feeble lamp which was placed in a little chapel, and left almost every part of the church in obscurity. Jane walked slowly, and as she advanced into this sanctuary of religion, she felt the sad agitation of her soul subside. Distressing recollections were effaced from her mind like airy dreams. A vague futurity, but immense and majestic, seemed to unfold itself before her. This sublime contemplation casts a pleasing veil over the past, if no remorse opposes it, while the illusions, pains and deceitful promises of life are dissipated and destroyed.—Jane entered the choir, sunk upon her knees, and raising her pure hands to Heaven, thus addressed her Maker: “ Oh God, deliver me from the torment of an impassioned attachment, Leave me all the generosity

of real friendship, with all the zeal and activity which profound piety can inspire. Leave me all the virtues of sensibility. Deign to remove from me the exaltation which leads me to fix my thoughts and wishes upon one object. Let the sacred flame, which warms the immortal soul, and by divine influence prepares it for eternity, purify my heart day by day, so that it may henceforth wish only to rise towards thee, oh inexhaustible source of perfection and light! Then shall I find internal peace and repose amidst the shades of night—then shall ingratitude and injustice cease to make me groan in secret.”

As she pronounced these words, she started; for she heard some one heave a deep sigh close to her. She turned her head, and her eyes being now accustomed to the darkness around her, she distinctly saw a female, prostrate, only two paces from her. She instantly concluded that it was the novice, who was to take the

veil on the following day, and who wished to pass a portion of the night in prayer.—Jane rose and approaching her said: “ Pious creature, whose soul is not led astray by the chimeras of the world, pray for me!”

At these words the novice arose, and seizing the robe of the Princess, kissed it with convulsive sobs. Jane, affected by her sorrows, leaned towards her and took one of her hands which she affectionately placed between her own; then fearing that she might disturb her, she withdrew, left the church and regained her apartment.

On the following day, the hour for the religious ceremony being arrived, Jane repaired to the church, and took her station in the middle of the choir. The novice appeared with her face shrouded in a white veil. Jane, who had heard such praises of her beauty, awaited her with mingled curiosity and emotion. She advanced with an unsteady step—she

evidently trembled. The Princess received a black veil from the female who performed the duties of the superior in her absence—the novice sunk upon her knees—her veil was removed—her countenance was exposed to view——! With indescribable distress Jane recognised the beautiful Athenais, formerly the distinguished favourite of Louis. Pride, vexation and shame had induced her to quit this world; repentance had kept her in solitude and had infused into her soul a sacred feeling which led her to expiate her faults by burying herself for ever in the monastery that Jane had founded. The rival of the Duchess of Orleans, when devoting herself to penitence, felt that she ought to prefer this institution to any other. With downcast eyes and hands closely clasped together, she received the black veil which the Duchess put upon her head, saying to the latter in a low and scarcely articulate voice:” *Pardon and purify me.*”

“ I should envy you,” said Jane,
“ I should admire and love you.”

After having received the veil from the hands of the Princess, Athenais rose, and casting a timid glance towards her, saw that her face was covered with tears. Athenais took her hand with most affecting expression, and profound respect. After the ceremony, they retired together and Jane learnt with joy, from their conversation, that religion, which can obtain pardon for our most grievous sins, can also heal the severest wounds of the heart.

Jane, who had written to the Duke of Orleans, on her arrival at Bourges, received nothing in reply but a cold laconic note, which completed her chagrin and dissatisfaction. The King's marriage had rescued her from the influence of a most dangerous rival, and she had experienced a secret delight in this, though she had sincerely renounced all the rights of a wife: but Louis still

loved the Queen passionately, and he seemed to have forgotten all the sacrifices made by Jane. This unfortunate Princess could make no more, and from the time that such was the case she ceased to be an interesting victim, and a heroine ever ready to devote herself. She could not endure the idea of being merely an ordinary woman in the eyes of Louis; she knew that admiration and gratitude very seldom support themselves on recollection. The only return she could expect from Louis she did not obtain, and she therefore at length resolved that, to overpower the sentiments she still retained as to him, she would employ all her piety and strength of mind, still preserving for him every sensation of generous friendship. She recollected all she had done, all she had suffered; and began to feel, for the first time, that if she could succeed in moderating so passionate an attachment, it would be a real happiness to her, when she received a

letter from Dunois, describing the melancholy condition of the Duke and conjuring her to return.

"Alas," said she, "it is not my absence that distresses him, but what of that? He is unhappy, and therefore I ought to be with him."

She set out immediately, and was not a little alarmed at the state in which she found the Duke. He was passing his whole time alone in the country. Dunois indeed was received, but even his presence appeared to be irksome. It was no longer possible to recognise the feeling and confiding Prince, over whom friendship exercised such sovereign sway. He was pale, dejected, silent, fierce! He no longer hoped for pity or consolation. Consumed by a passion, which was become as insensate as it was criminal, he passed sentence on himself and with excessive rigour. His affection was no longer returned. There was no illusion that could conceal from him the full ex-

tent of his weakness. He was, however, not insensible to Jane's sudden return; he would rather have heard a thousand reproaches than have thought that he was abandoned; but by one of those fantastical humours which moroseness will give way to, he suppressed the pleasure that he really felt on again beholding her, and even affected to feel offence at her coming to disturb him in his solitude. Jane was so deeply wounded that she would have attempted to assume a degree of carelessness, had she not been struck by the alteration in his appearance; but being uneasy as to his health, she forgave all, and thought only of the means, by which she could render him more comfortable. She employed her whole sagacity and penetration to discover what was passing in his exasperated and desolate heart. She succeeded. In a short time, her tenderness reanimated his sinking soul, and by degrees reconciled him to himself. He was moved by so

much attention on her part, and his dejected mind regained its confidence. Friendship again attached him to life. He thought he could surmount his culpable passion, because Jane still esteemed and loved him. He remained three months in his country retreat, where no one, except Dunois, was admitted. The latter sometimes went to Paris, from which city he brought back intelligence; and when he was last there he heard of Madame's complete disgrace. The Queen, who was three years older than Charles, and a woman of very superior endowments, easily discovered that the Duchess de Beaujeu was endeavouring to injure her and made most pernicious impressions on the mind of the King. Anne came to a long explanation with him. Her conduct was so irreproachable that the ascendancy over Charles, which love gave her, would by no means have been necessary towards her justification. On the very day that this interview took

place, Madame suddenly set out for Chantelle and never returned.* Her disgrace was to her a hopeless misfortune, unattended by any indemnification, for it did not even constitute the theme of general conversation, which is always in some degree consolatory to wounded pride. The measure was praised, but it excited no surprise, and no one deigned to occupy himself with the subject. This lofty woman, whose passions were so violent, passed in continued exile the remnant of life till that time devoted to ambition. After having deserved to be hated by her abuse of unbounded authority, she drew contempt upon herself by descending, in spite of her rank, to act the subaltern part of an intriguer. Providence condemned her to perpetual obscurity. Even her enemies forgot her, and this was a sufficient punishment.

* Historical.

The Duke of Orleans re-appeared at court just when great preparations were making for war against Italy. Charles announced that he should put himself at the head of his troops. Louis earnestly intreated permission to accompany him, and obtained a command of importance. The Queen was declared Regent, during the absence of Charles, and the army began its march early in spring.* I will not attempt to describe Jane's grief, when Louis, dressed in his martial habit, took leave of her. What woman is there among us, who has not, in the course of the last five and twenty years, experienced this dreadful heart-breaking sensation, for some object of her love?—Women are always the greatest sufferers by a long war; for ambition and glory soon make fatigues and dangers familiar, but how accustom ourselves to the perpetual dread, that every thing terrible and tragic, of

* Historical.

which imagination can form an idea, will fall upon a person dear to the heart?

Jane knew that when Louis went to fight under the command of his sovereign, he glowed with desire to surpass the talents and valour, which he had displayed at the battle of Saint-Aubin. Hence it was certain that he would not only expose himself to dangers, but that he would seek them with avidity. The inquietudes, by which Jane was agitated, convinced her more than ever of the energetic feeling, which attached her existence to that of Louis. She wished to go and shut herself in her monastery at Bourges, but the Queen detained her, that she might have a companion, with whom she could weep. These two Princesses, so capable of mutually appreciating each other's worth, spent almost every evening together, without any other society. They never alluded to the Duke of Orleans—they spoke little—but they sympathised in the affliction of each other. Jane

shared the uneasiness, felt for a brother whom she sincerely loved ; and Anne thought that, on so alarming an occasion, she might, without any departure from her duty, feel a dread of the perils, to which the object of her first attachment was exposed. Danger does not revive the affection which virtue has extinguished, but it leads us back to former times ; and could she fail to recollect the terrors she experienced when the battle of Saint Aubin took place ? Frequently, when she was for whole hours with no one but Jane, would she silently press the hand of the latter. Their tears flowed and they understood each other.

Anne displayed, during her regency, the firmness, economy, justice, beneficence and vigilance, which cause supreme power to be respected ; for the true talents of sovereigns are their virtues. She attended actively to public affairs, and formed a court worthy of herself. It was characterised by piety without rigour,

and gaiety united with good morals. It was she who first appointed maids of honour,* whose youth and beauty constituted the ornament of the court. As they were at liberty to marry, the noblemen and gentlemen were allowed to pay them attentions, and gallantry was combined with the strictest principles. Anne instituted the order of the *Cordelières*† for the ladies ; but she only granted it to those who were distinguished by all the virtues, of which she herself was the model. This order was prodigiously extended during her reign, but it did not survive its illustrious founder.

Meanwhile, Charles proved in Italy that he was worthy of commanding a French army. His marches were rapid, and his success corresponded with them. In this brilliant expedition, the result of which was the conquest of the kingdom of Naples,‡ the Duke of Orleans distin-

* Historical. † Historical. ‡ Historical.

guished himself by signal exploits. Charles returned in triumph to France with his brave warriors. What return like that of a victorious army, which brings peace with it? How many tears are wiped away, and when the events of war are no longer feared, what enthusiasm is felt for the glory obtained by those whom we love!

Jane received Louis with transports of joy which deeply affected him. He clasped her in his arms, saying every thing tender and affectionate, which gratitude and esteem could inspire. On the same day he again beheld the Queen, and it was with more uneasiness than ever. She had acquired additional charms in his estimation, by the superior merit displayed during her regency. On the following day he left Paris, under the pretext of going to repose after the fatigues of the campaign, but he was accompanied by Jane, Dunois, and some other friends. How happy did Jane

find herself! Louis was tender and kind towards her, for he was pleased with the encomiums she liberally bestowed on the Queen, and the approbation, on her part, of the esteem he felt for her Majesty. Jane resigned herself entirely to the hopes which she had so long suppressed. She thought she was become so necessary to the comfort of Louis, that he could never part with her, and disposed as she was to view every thing in a favorable light, she even persuaded herself that the passion, which he felt for the Queen, was not to be lamented, because it prevented any other. In a word, she convinced herself, with delight, that nothing could henceforth dissolve the tie which united her lord and herself.

After having passed some time in the country, Louis and Jane rejoined the court, which was then at the castle of Amboise where Charles and Jane were born. On their arrival they found all in confusion. People were running to and

fro in every direction. Questions were asked in vain, and all that could be heard was: "*Will he recover? Is he dead?*"

"Oh Heavens!" exclaimed Jane. "What has happened? Let us hasten to the King!"

They alighted from the carriage, and entered the castle. No one was to be seen in the hall. They ascended the stairs, and there found all the guards in consternation, while a crowd of courtiers hastened towards Louis and proclaimed him King of France. Charles VIII was no longer in existence. He fell, while walking in the gallery of the castle, and left this world in the flower of his youth, surrounded by the nobles of his court. An apoplectic stroke put a period to his life in a few minutes.* Jane was so overpowered by this intelligence, that

* Historical.

she seemed as if about to join her unfortunate brother, and rested her head on the shoulder of Louis, without being able to utter a word. He intreated her to retire to her apartment, and commissioned Dunois to conduct her thither, assuring her that he would shortly come to her, but that he wished first to ascertain in person whether it was not possible to save the King. Every effort to do this was in vain, and Louis, after having fulfilled a painful duty, hastened to Jane. As he passed through the apartments, he perceived the Duke de la Tremouille, who was the commander that made him a prisoner at the battle of Saint-Aubin, and who had ever since been his enemy. He was the only courtier who had not yet done homage to him. At his approach La Tremouille drew back, and appeared as if he wished to retrace his steps, but the King called to him, and presenting his hand, said : “ Approach with confidence, *for the King of France*

*will never avenge the injuries done to the Duke of Orleans.**" From this moment La Tremouille swore the same fidelity to his new sovereign, which he had displayed in the service of his predecessor, and he kept his word.

While Louis traversed the castle, he was followed by a multitude of all ranks; for such was the disorder, caused by the unexpected event, that the people in the street freely entered the castle and joined the courtiers. The mien of Louis was that of genuine grief. His looks, and a few words, which came from the bottom of his heart, won all around him. They had loved Charles, but they had not leisure to regret the best of Kings at the moment that a new reign was commencing. At such a time how many projects are formed! How completely do hope and ambition occupy the mind of the courtier! Much was expected of Louis.

* His own words.

Happy presentiments announced a paternal monarch, and the love of the people paid by anticipation for the good actions of futurity.

Louis separated himself from his numerous train at the door of Jane's apartment, which he entered with the liveliest emotion he had ever felt. He was about to fulfil a great duty, but it was one which cost him a most distressing sacrifice, and yet he felt a gratification in such being the case. He knew how to appreciate the happiness, so rare in life, of being able to shew, by a single good action, all the goodness of heart, and strength of mind, which human nature is capable of exhibiting. He expected to find Jane in her chamber with Dunois, but was told that she had expressed a wish to be alone, and was in her cabinet. He went to it, opened the door, and saw her on her knees, imploring the aid of the Almighty to support her firmness.

On hearing a noise, she rose and turned — she saw Louis approaching with open arms—and sunk to the earth. He ran to her, and throwing himself at her feet, said in a tremulous voice: “I am at length able to prove to you my tenderness and gratitude. Oh you, who are worthy of ascending the throne of the universe, if such an empire existed—you, whom my heart prefers to all, receive from your husband the vow of inviolable fidelity. How gratifying is it to me that I can renew it when I am able to offer you a crown!”

At these words he stopped, and cast down his eyes which were filled with tears. Jane pressed one of his hands to her heart.

“I recognise you, completely in this,” said she. “The greatness of your soul will always constitute my felicity, and will never surprise me. Let me devote this mournful day to seclusion,

tears and prayers. To-morrow—to-morrow I will answer you.—A thousand important affairs demand your present attention.—Go.—This day I devote entirely to religion and the memory of my brother.”

Louis kissed both her hands and silently obeyed ; but on his reaching the door of the cabinet, Jane rushed towards him. “ I have not thanked you,” said she, throwing her arms round his neck.—“ Embrace me.—Adieu.”

The last word was pronounced in a tone which rent the heart of Louis. He started—but Jane immediately disengaged herself from his arms. He retired, and his unfortunate consort felt as if she were alone in the world. She again sunk upon her knees, and though unable to pray, from the acuteness of her suffering, remained more than two hours in this position. At length she summoned her fortitude again, and said: “ It is now time

to act. He has at least enabled me at last to perform a part worthy of me.— Yes, I am sure that the illusion of his generous friendship has led him, for a moment, to believe, that I should accept his seductive offers ; but when he recollects my past conduct, he will at once be undeceived. Let me accomplish my sad destiny.”

She summoned her attendants, and gave all the necessary orders for her departure towards midnight, enjoining the strictest secrecy :—then dismissing them, she took her pen, and made a sort of will in favour of the persons who were attached to her, the servants of her household and many poor dependants. She then took from the casket the miniature of Anne, which Louis had presented to her when in prison, wishing to combine this and her will with the answer which she had promised to give on the following day. When Louis was to receive this

packet, she meant to be far on her road to Bourges.

At six o'clock in the evening, she distinctly heard an immense crowd, assembled in the court of the palace, repeatedly shouting: "*Long live Louis the Twelfth!*" These words penetrated to her heart.

"Unfortunate Charles," exclaimed she, shedding a flood of tears, "it was the lot of us both not to be loved. Alas, he is not deeply regretted by any one except his sister. He has taken with him to the tomb all my hopes; for will a throne and love allow Louis to regret my absence? Will he lament a sacrifice which accords with all his secret wishes? By burying myself for ever in a convent, and binding myself by irrevocable vows, shall I even cause a few tears to flow? Amidst the intoxication of their bliss, and the splendour by which they will be surrounded, will they bestow a thought upon

that unhappy daughter of Kings, who is rejected, repudiated, clad in hair-cloth, and buried in the obscurity of a cloister?"

Sorrow undoubtedly mingled much bitterness with these cruel reflections, and Jane felt its full force, but it had no irritating effect. We are never unjust towards those we love, except when driven to absolute despair.

At ten o'clock a message from the King was announced. This title made Jane shudder. Persons entered and delivered to her, in the name of Louis, the royal jewels which Anne had sent to him. On the box, which contained them, were these words, written by Louis himself: "*To the Queen of France.*" Jane's magnanimous heart felt the full value of this action. Anne, as a Princess who was become a stranger to France, had returned the jewels; Louis had accepted them, and, in presenting them to Jane, had publicly proclaimed her *Queen of France*, after

having had a whole day to reflect on such a proceeding. All these ideas occurred, at the same time, to her imagination, but did not in any degree alter her resolution. The unhappy Princess found in them, on the contrary, a reward worthy of her heroic devotion. This new proof of attachment, on the part of Louis, this brilliant triumph of friendship over love, poured healing balm into the deep wounds of her heart. With what satisfaction she acknowledged her own injustice and ingratitude ! " Yes," said she, " I will excite his admiration, and that will secure to me his regret."

At midnight, all was quiet in the palace, and her carriage was announced. She became uneasy and remained motionless for a few minutes. Suddenly she recollected that one of her suite of apartments was next to the great court, and that the windows of it were just opposite to those of the room, in which were the

remains of her lamented brother.—She rose, went into this apartment, opened the window, walked into the balcony, and stood rooted to the spot at seeing the mournful spectacle before her. The heat was excessive, and the night dark. The windows of the room, in which the corpse lay, were open, and the chamber was illuminated by a great number of wax tapers placed round a state bed. Upon this bed Jane saw her deceased brother, clad in his royal robes. She distinctly perceived the splendid diadem upon his head—the vain and fragile ornament, of which death had deprived him. She perceived too the sceptre of authority, placed in his motionless hand; and leaning over the balcony, exclaimed in a voice which was interrupted by her sobs: “ Oh my brother, what a mournful resemblance is there in our destinies ! It was in that same chamber that we both received the sad gift of existence. I now

see thee on the bed of death, and this day also terminates my public existence. But I must endure protracted agony, while thou art at rest. All the vanity of human affairs is to thee extinct, and I renounce all the grandeur of this world. When thy remains shall be borne to their last home, I too shall enter the sepulchre which I have prepared for myself."

She ceased, and raised her heavy eyelids towards Heaven. At that moment the clouds dispersed, and she beheld the azure sky, covered with brilliant stars. The beautiful change made her revive—she felt as if Heaven opened to receive her—she felt as if her soul was winging its flight thither. A celestial voice seemed to address her—she listened with rapture, and all her fortitude again inspired her.—She hastily returned to her cabinet—she put together the casket containing the miniature of Anne, the crown jewels, her will, and the bracelets which Louis

had long before presented to her, the only ornament she had ever worn. She formed the whole into a parcel, and wrote upon it these words: "*I offer to the Queen the most valuable property that I possess.*"—She then cut off one of her long auburn tresses, which she destined to be the last pledge of her attachment to Louis; and taking her pen, wrote with a trembling hand as follows:—

"She, who has displayed so much talent, and so many virtues on the throne, must not descend from it. You will be the best of Kings, she the pattern of Queens.—Can I complain of my lot, with such a conviction?—No. I depart, penetrated with gratitude towards you.—Your generosity has formed a sacred tie, which will unite us all three for ever, because it has made me the arbiter of your destiny, and your happiness will be effected by me. That happiness is the only gratification I can henceforth feel.

—Adieu—I have lived only to love you. I have wished for no human grandeur but such as would exalt you. I have known no amusement but such as pleased you. Through my whole life I have felt only one sentiment, of which you were the object.—I do not quit the court and the world, for I have seen you and you only. I bear into retirement only one recollection.—Adieu.—My last sigh, my last prayer will be for you.”

END.

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